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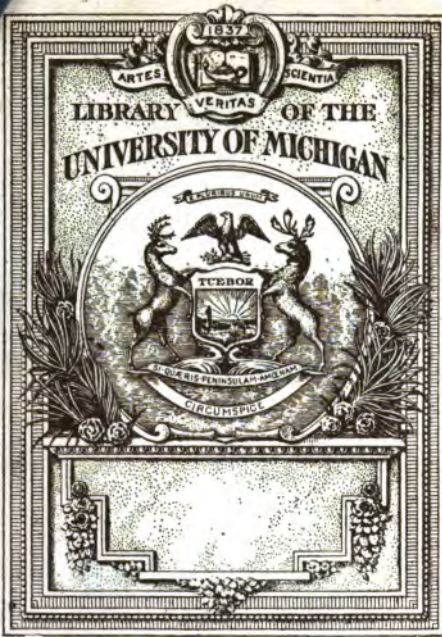
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BE

Dr. Johnson.

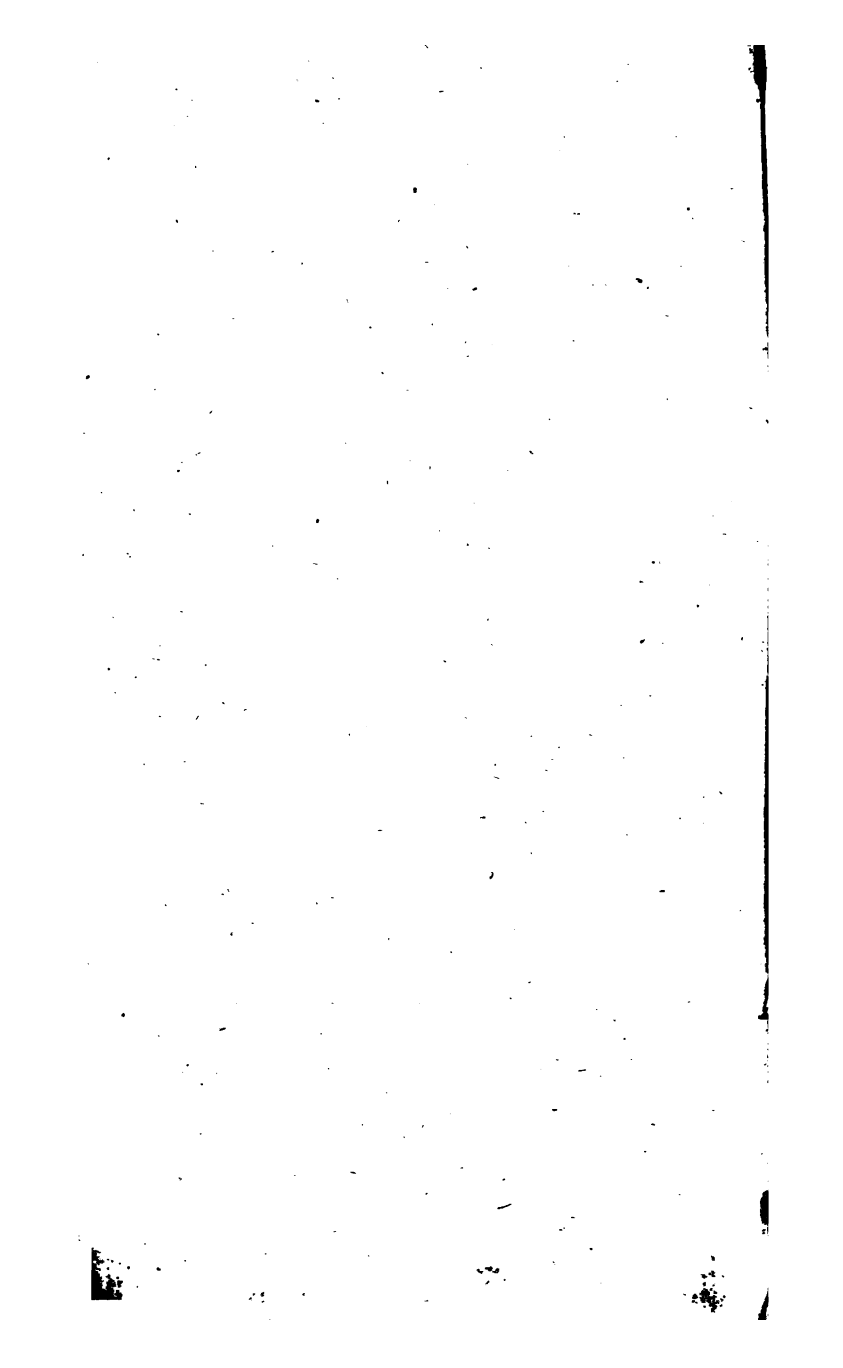


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LETTERS

WRITTEN BY

A TURKISH SPY,

Who Lived Five-and-Forty Years Undiscovered at

PARIS;

Giving an Impartial Account to the Divan at Constantinople of the most Remarkable Transactions of Europe, and discovering several Intrigues and Secrets of the Christian Courts, (especially of that of France) continued from the Year 1659 to the Year 1682.

Written originally in Arabic, Translated into Italian, and from thence into English.

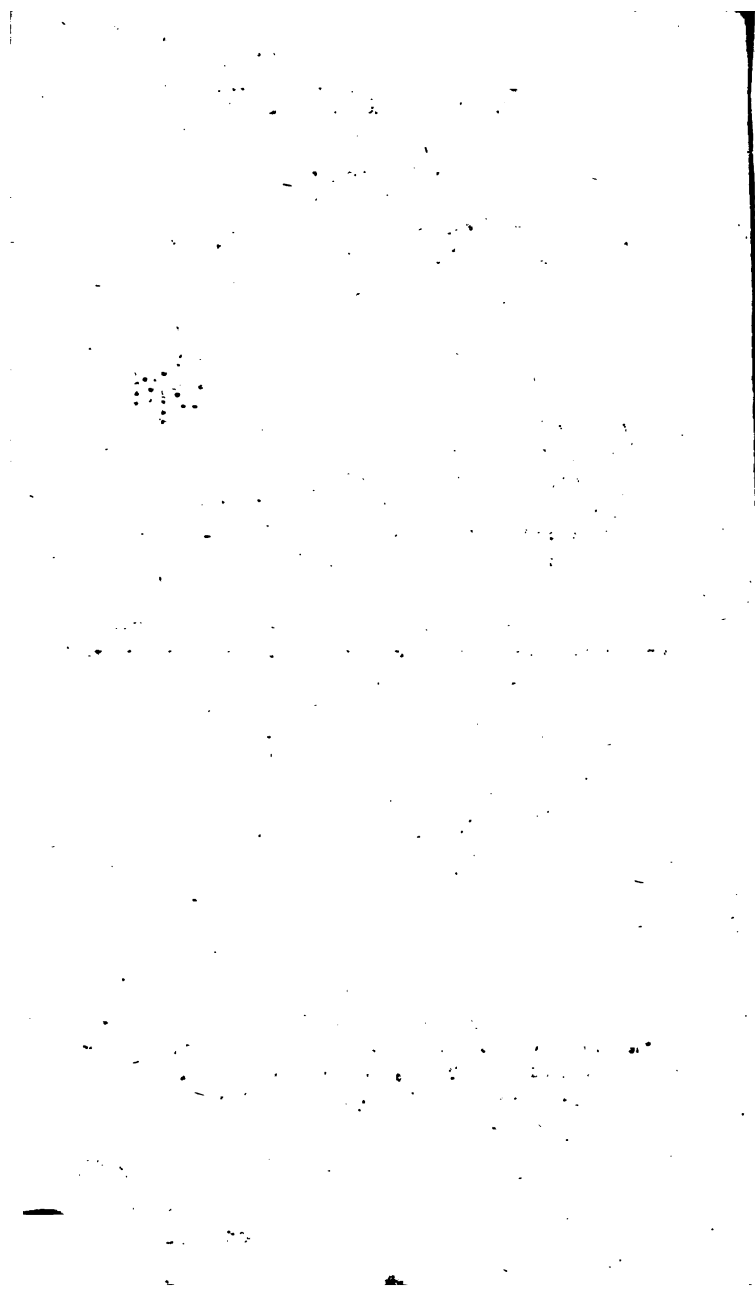
VOLUME SIXTH.

A NEW EDITION.

LONDON:

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1801.



TO THE READER.

As superfluous as prefaces seem, yet there is one thing which makes it in a manner necessary to prefix a few lines to this volume, in regard there is an occasion given by the objections some gentlemen have been lately pleased to make against the style of the English translation. These persons having, by a very costly inquisitiveness, found and procured the Italian copy of the Letters, and compared them with the English, pick many faults in the latter, which they would fain improve to the lessening the reputation of the Turkish Spy, or at least to the heightening of their own characters as wits and critics, masters of languages, and the grand patentees of human sense.

In the first place, they say the Italian translation keeps close to the original Arabic, whereas the English abounds too much with Anglicisms, which are not sufficient to express the author's primitive sense.

How impossible a thing it is to please all people in undertakings of this nature! Formerly they were offended that so many Turkish and Arabic words were left untranslated; and that being answered in the preface to the fourth volume, they have now

formed new arguments out of that very answer to assault us on the contrary side, and tax us with being too Vernacular. It is true, the letters they have sent to the bookseller on this account are not subscribed at length, yet by accident one of the gentlemen's handwriting is known; and though we acknowledge him to be an ingenious person, and a man of learning, yet I believe he would be unwilling his letter should here be exposed in print, or the original showed to some that know him, and perhaps may claim an equal rank among the critics.

But to come to the purpose: I have often heard translations blamed for keeping too close to the original phrase, but never any before this for a negligence that is absolutely necessary to retain the sense of a foreign author. All the world knows there is a vast difference between Arabic and the languages of Europe; and if the Italian translator was more exact in forming his words up to a near imitation of the Eastern proprieties of speech, no doubt but impartial men will rather censure it as a fault, than cry it up for an excellency, since nothing sounds well in any language, which is not delivered in the natural idiom. Every thing ought to be written in as familiar a style as we discourse, especially letters, which are but a proxy method of conversing at a distance; and he that translates out of one language into another ought to aim chiefly at this, that he be sure to retain the original sense, and render it smooth and easy to the reader. The flowers of Arabia and Italy, when once transplanted to our barren English soil, lose their virtue and beauty till they are naturalised;

what then must we expect from their weeds? Doubtless there are some peculiarities in all languages; and to translate *verbatim* from so remote a tongue, would sound as harsh as French does in an Englishman's mouth, when he pronounces it as it is written.

What I have more to say, is, that as this volume contains a history of things transacted within the memory of most men now living, so the two succeeding tomes fall down lower and nearer to the present times; giving an account of events whereof many have been eye-witnesses, and wherein not a few have had a personal share, either by way of action, or suffering profit or damage; which must needs afford delight to thinking men, since there is nothing more agreeable to mortals than to reflect on the former passages of their lives, according to that of the poet:

Hæc olim meminisse juvabit.

Besides, for the farther encouragement of the candid reader, he may assure himself, that towards the conclusion of the last volume, he will meet with several secrets between the French and Turkish courts, which will discover the true source of the present war between the Emperor of Germany and the Grand Signior, and give a glimpse of the private machinations and springs which have put all Europe into the hurly-burly it is now in.

I have but this more to say, that we hope to be more speedy in publishing the remainder of these Letters than we have hitherto been in the former volumes.

Reader, adieu.



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LETTERS

WRITTEN BY

A SPY AT PARIS.

BOOK I.

LETTER I.—*MAHMUT the Arabian at Paris, to
DGNET OGLOU, his Friend, at Constantinople.*

It makes me smile sometimes, when I reflect how often I was put to it for an address suitable to the manners of the Nazarenes, and the particular mode of Paris, when I first arrived at this city; for, thou knowest, we had other employments than to learn fashions and congees at Palermo. The mind of a slave is dejected, under the circumstances of his captivity; so that he has not leisure to regard any thing, but how to accomplish his daily task, and to please his patron. All his study and care is bent upon this, and there is no room left for generous thoughts; neither has he means or courage to venture on projects, or improve the present occurrences, in order to his future happiness; nay, he hardly dares think of ever being happy again. This was my case, and I believe it was not much better with thee.

Vol. VI.

A

Yet, notwithstanding all the rigorous usage I had, the bastinadoes, kicks, bruises, cuts, and wounds I received from the hands of that barbarous Giafer, my master, which made me sometimes incapable of doing him any service by day, or of taking any rest myself by night, I was resolved to find some spare time for books; I rose early, and went late to sleep, neglecting no moment wherein I could apply myself to study. The acquaintance I had with that Sicilian carpenter, our friend, was of singular advantage to me in this kind; for, thou mayest remember he was well stocked with many ancient and learned treatises. He furnished me with Plutarch, Polybius, Strabo, Pliny, and other histories; all which, and many more, I devoured with greediness, for I had a strong appetite to knowledge. And after my redemption, I passed away some time in the academies, where I learned the knotty tricks of logic, how to split moods and figures, and chain one impertinent syllogism to the tail of another to eternity: I also ran through a course of philosophy, and other sciences: Neither was I altogether ignorant of men; for the reading of histories fits a man the better to make practical experiments in the affairs of the world; to which also philosophy is not a little helpful, in directing our observations of the various tempers of people, mens personal dispositions and singularities, with the humours and customs peculiar to this or that nation; for these things depend many times on the difference of the climate, the nature of the soil, the qualities of the air, and the manner of their diet.

But neither history, logic, or philosophy, were able to efface the impressions of my early years, or unteach me the manners in which I had been educated from my infancy. I brought Arabia and Constantinople along with me even to Paris. And because I had not been used to

dissemble the profession and carriage of a musfulman during my thralldom in Sicily, I was at a loss in my deportment when I came first hither.

How often have I been like to discover myself by pronouncing the sacred bismillah, either when I sat down to eat, or put a glass of water to my lips, or when I began any other action of importance! so likewise in uttering the handillah, after a repast, or when any thing happened which prompted me to praise God.

When I met any of my acquaintance in the streets, I was apt to forget that I had a hat on; and, instead of putting off that, according to the fashion of the Franks, I laid my hand on my breast, and sometimes bowed so low, that my hat fell off from my head, before I was sensible of my error.

If I had occasion to address myself to a person of quality, I was ready to take up the bottom of his cloak, gown, or robe, and to kiss it in token of reverence, as the custom is in the East, when we salute the grandees; nay, sometimes I could not forbear falling on my knee, or prostrate on the ground before Cardinal Richlieu, and those of his high dignity; all which, nevertheless, passed only for clownishness, and want of courtly education, which teaches the nice punctilios of address. They took me for a kind of Moldavian rustic, without any farther jealousy; or, perhaps, they smiled at all this, as some singular caprice or humour, like that of the philosopher Pasicles, who coming to salute a great captain, and the ceremony of those times requiring him to touch the captain's knee, he laid his hands on his genitals; at which the captain being affronted, and thrusting his hand away with scornful words, "What! (says the philosopher) does not that part belong to you, as well as your knees?" It often diverts my melancholy, to consider

how many errors of this kind I have committed, not through ignorance, or any cynical humour, but only in pure oversight and forgetfulness.

It was a long time e'er I could frame my fingers to handle a knife and fork at meals, as is the universal custom in these western parts; whereas thou knowest, we make use of no other instruments in eating but our fingers and teeth; whence it was, that I could not sometimes forbear thrusting my hand into a whole dish of meat, which is counted a great indecency in France. And after I was reconciled to those nicer instruments of voluptuousness, so as to carve my meat à-la-mode; yet, when once I had it on my own plate, I laid aside those tools as useless, and tore it asunder with my fingers and teeth, feeding à la Turcesque, as the French call it, that is, like a mussulman.

Nevertheless, nobody suspected me; but all these miscarriages passed for Moldavian barbarisms, the savage customs of that my supposed country. I tell thee, that though the manner of eating among the French seems to have something more of neatness and delicacy in it, yet it appears full of softness and luxury, and I cannot in reason prefer it to the more natural and simple method of diet used in the East. Neither would the Franks themselves condemn us for savages in this point, as they commonly do, did they but consider, that this negligence very well becomes men of the sword; and that in their campaigns, their own generals are ambitious to appear careless in every thing relating to their body.

Doubtless, the ancient Romans, who brought the greatest part of the world under their power, shunned all finenesses in diet and apparel, till such time as their manners were debauched, and their empire in its decline. Our annals record, that when Sultan Selim lay down

with his army before a certain place, and the governor of the town sent commissioners to treat with him about a surrender, they found him at dinner, which consisted only of two or three onions, a little salt and bread.

Histories also relate of the faithful Omar, successor of the prophet, that when he was with his army not far from Jerusalem, the Nazarene prince who governed that city sent a spy into the host of the mussulmans, to observe their discipline, and bring him a lively character of their general. The spy went according to his master's order, and having tarried some time in the Arabian camp, returned again, and thus spoke to the governor :

“ It will be needless to recount every thing I observed among these soldiers, since by what I shall say of their leader, thou mayest comprehend the manners of them all ; for they obey him, and follow his example in every thing, with exquisite silence and modesty. I saw Omar their prince, at the head of his army, sitting on a camel, his face tawny, and scorched by the sun, in a vest of Persian cotton, girded about with a belt of leather, at which hung a scimeter and dagger, with a knapsack tied behind him like the meanest soldier. I saw him take out from thence hard crusts of bread, shaking off the husks of millet which stuck to them, and saying, ‘ In the name of God,’ eat heartily of the same. Then he drank water out of a leathern bottle hanging by his side ; and when he had done, he said, ‘ Praise be to God.’ All his army made their repast at the same time, and in the same manner, with admirable temperance, and such an order and modesty, as I never saw before, neither can I express.”

When the prince heard this, he stood still a considerable time, musing as one astonished. Then turning to the seniors and chief of the people who were present, he

said, " It is necessary that we surrender our city to these people, for they have the smiles of Heaven : Their prophet and their law oblige them to temperance, frugality, obedience, and a modest deportment. These virtues are certain steps to victory and empire. Besides, I have received a tradition from my ancestors, that a people shall come out of Arabia, with a new law and religion, which shall abolish all that went before it ; they shall subdue Palestine and Egypt, and shall build mosques, wherein their prayers shall sound like the humming of bees ; their empire shall extend from east to west, and to the extremities of the earth. This is what I have learned from my forefathers, and which I believe is now coming to pass ; therefore it will be in vain to resist these men, for they are invincible by a decree from above."

Those that were about him, did not approve the counsel of this wise Nazarene. However, he sent to Omar, and obtained favour for himself and his family.

Thou wilt say, I am got wide of the mark of my first discourse, which related to myself, and not to any of the primitive caliphs : But it is impossible to restrain our thoughts from roving. Some say, they hang together like the links of a chain ; and that one idea being fastened to another in our memory, we muster them in rank and file, according to their proper order, when we think, or make reflections : God knows how it is. This I am sure of, that when I write to my friends, I study not to make an elaborate speech of it, as if I were penning an oration ; but, pursuing my first intention at random, I run on, letting one thought and word beget another.

But I was telling thee how great a bungler I was at first, in all the ceremonies and manners of the Franks, which differ from those of the East. I was as much to

seek in my address, as an ass would be to play on a lute, according to the Roman proverb; yet time and practice rendered all these things familiar and easy. Now, methinks, I am a thorough-paced Nazarene as to my exterior: I go to the court and the temples, with as much seeming formality as the Christians, whilst, God knows, my heart is somewhere else: All my actions are out of their natural bias, so long as I am absent from the society of true believers.

In a word, I am forced to imitate the fox, which creature, when it is environed with the huntsmen and dogs, counterfeits a barking like the latter, and so passes undiscovered for one of their company.

Paris, 3d of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1659.

II.—*To the REIS EFFENDI, or Principal Secretary of the Ottoman Empire.*

I AM at this time possessed with more apprehensions and jealousies, than an old infidel usurer; my lodging affects me with greater melancholy than would a prison; and my uneasiness is the same when I go out of doors. Every body that meets me looks either as my accuser or my judge, and some appear as terrible as executioners. By day, my imagination torments me like a fury, and by night I am affrighted with melancholy visions; I dream of nothing but racks, wheels, saws, gibbets, and such like instruments of human cruelty; or, that I am in some dark dungeon, condemned to more unsufferable tortures, by order of the state, with Cardinal Mazarini sitting by me, like a Spanish inquisitor, and in the most tyrannical manner, threatening me with pains, to which the damned themselves are wholly strangers, if I will not

confess what I am, and reveal the secrets with which I am intrusted.

The occasion of these terrors which harass me night and day, is this: I have for four or five days together found myself dodged up and down Paris, by a man whose face I never saw before in my life: Let me go where I will, he is always at some distance from me; if I stand still, so does he, or if I turn back, he is quickly at my heels. I have endeavoured by all the prudent methods I could take, to drop him in the crowd of people, or in the churches, but all in vain, for still I encounter with the same face; he pursues me like my shadow. Neither coach nor boat, land or water, house or alley, can rescue me from the fellow's eyes, who is more quick-sighted than Argus, and nimbler than Mercury. He is very cunning also in this business, and as dexterous as a juggler, conveying himself when he pleases out of my sight, yet presently after he is in view again; and if I chance to lose him in the dark, I am sure to find him not far from my lodging next morning.

This it is which gives me so much disturbance; and pierces me with a thousand anxieties, for I know not what to conjecture of this fellow's design: Sometimes I think he is employed by Cardinal Mazarin to watch my motions, observe what houses and company I frequent, and trace me in all my appointments; and I am the more confirmed in this suspicion, when I reflect on my former imprisonment in this city, and the occasion of it. Besides, when I went yesterday to see Eliachim the Jew, this spark followed me near to the door; and though I tarried there two full hours, yet when I came out, I had not walked an hundred paces, before I saw him again, footing it after me in a careless manner, with his arms folded, and his eyes fixed on the ground, as if he knew

nothing of the matter. These are convincing circumstances, that he is set at work by the cardinal, or some body else, to discover my business.

But when, on the other side, I consider, that if the cardinal suspected me, he might go a nearer way to work, and seize me in my chamber, where my letters would betray me, this thought vanishes, and I am at a loss what to think.

Then comes into my mind the encounter I had once with my Sicilian master, who strove to set the rabble upon me in the streets of Paris; but my better stars delivered me out of his and their hands, whilst, for aught I know, he drew upon himself the mischief he designed for me. However, when I reflect on that passage, I am apt to think he may be now in Paris, and having by some accident seen me go in or out at my lodgings, contrives how to revenge himself on me, and uses this fellow's assistance in compassing his ends. Perhaps, think I, he will cause me to be stabbed or pistoled at some convenient season, or he will find out some other way, less noisy and more malicious, to dispatch me. It may be he seeks to entrap me, and render me obnoxious to the state. I have a thousand imaginations about it, and know not what to conclude. I value not myself, nor am I careful to prolong a miserable life for my own sake: All that I can hope to enjoy in this world would come far short of tempting me to screen myself from the stroke of death, by any action unworthy of a philosopher and a man; but the duty and affection I owe to the Grand Signior's service, makes me willing to live, till I have acquitted myself of my province with perfect success, that so I may return to Constantinople with honour; and then I care not how soon I part to that unknown world,

where all the generations of mortals take up their eternal rest; for in this there is nothing but labour and grief.

In the mean time, I know not what conduct to use in this emergency; whether I had best speak to this fellow, or dissemble my suspicion; whether it will be safe to trust this event to the general providence, or to sacrifice him that gives me so much disquiet, and so secure my peace. I could easily have him dispatched without any farther noise; but then my conscience would trouble me with after-claps, lest I should have murdered a man without reason, which is expressly forbid by the Alcoran. Besides, I should always stand in fear of some discovery. I protest, I am at a loss for want of ample instructions in such cases as these; and I am weary of mentioning what I have so often intimated already to the ministers of the Porte, without any direct answer. However, I will do what my reason suggests, and leave the event to destiny.

Happy minister! the affairs of this world are full of dark windings and meanders, and we have all need of a guide or a clew to conduct us through them. May that Omnipresent assist us, whenever we are caught in a knot, or lost in a labyrinth of difficulties.

Paris, 25th of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1659.

III.—To ABDEL MELEC MÜLI OMAR, *President of the College of Sciences at Fez.*

THY venerable dispatch I received with kisses, and a transport of joy; I thrice touched my eyelids with the paper of high esteem, and as oft I laid it to my breast; I broke up the seals with modesty and reverence, and

my greedy eyes devoured the lines of profound wisdom, the sentences and aphorisms worthy to be written in letters of gold. Then it was I blest the hour of my nativity, and the more happy moment wherein I first had the honour of thy familiarity and friendship : Oh, thou sincere and eximious patron of such as love the sciences ! Renowned for thy learning and probity of manners ! Prince of the alfaquis and doctors ! Crown of the sage assembly of philosophers ! Oracle of the age !

Glory be to God, who has neither beginning nor end ! who alone possesses the infinite expanse and life eternal ; who is adored by the inhabitants of heaven, of earth, and of hell : Benedictions on Michael, Gabriel, Israhiel, Ithuriel, Jeremiel, Hasmariel, and on all the happy ministers of his divine majesty, as also on the angel of death. Peace to the true believers on earth, and salvation to the devils and damned, after they have accomplished their penance in hell, and the term of wrath shall be expired.

An univèrsal charity dilates my heart ; I embrace with love all the creatures of God. This is owing to the seasonable arrival of thy letter ; for at the moment when that came, I was plunged in so deep a melancholy, that I could hardly afford a kind thought for any thing on earth, and I perfectly hated myself. I have these fits of sadness often, it being an effect of my constitution.

At those seasons, life appears an insupportable burden, and all the bustle and noise of mortals a vain fatigue. My senses, which at other times administer delight and pleasure, are now the instruments of anguish and pain ; every thing I see and hear disgusts me ; I abhor my necessary food ; neither can the sweetest odours, or softest strains of music, bring me into a better temper, till sleep eclipses the light of my busy imagination, and puts out every glancing thought. Then my soul takes her repose ; and,

stealing from my body, enters into the shady vale of visions, and sports with innocent ideas. Thus having diverted myself with jumbling monstrous essences together, and hurling one chimera at another, I return again to my body; and sighing awake, grieved that I could not longer stay in that mock world, where I could have wished my residence for ever, rather than in this, which gives me so much real pain. Thus is my anguish renewed with the morning; light is more irksome to me than darkness; and the day, which brings joy to other mortals, is more terrible to me than night, and the shadow of death.

I complain to the elements, but they will not hear or regard me; all nature seems to laugh at my affliction, and the beasts of the field triumph over me. As for men, here are none but infidels, my professed enemies, to whom I can vent my sorrows; and I am ashamed to make a woman my confessor, though it were my own mother, who lives in Paris, and daily sees me.

If, in this dolorous condition, I prepare myself with the accustomed purifications of the law, and address to the Omnipotent, I know not where to find him; his essence is unsearchable, and flies from human thought; I call him aloud by his ninety-nine adorable names, but receive no answer; I repeat his incomprehensible attributes, but all to no purpose: In a word, I say and do all that the law enjoins, the prophet counsels, holy persons recommend, or my own reason suggests, as a proper means to obtain the favour of Heaven, and a redress of my calamity, but find no comfort; and, for aught I know, that Spanish might as soon be heard, who, being ignorant what form of prayer to use, rehearsed the four-and-twenty letters of the alphabet, desiring God to form such words out of them as best expressed the petitioner's necessities.

I tell thee, illustrious prelate, after I am tired with va-

cal devotions, I have recourse to contemplation ; I examine my past life, and find that I myself am the source of my own melancholy, in not strictly obeying the law of the prophet, the precepts of the seniors, and the dictates of my conscience ; and all this for the sake of loyalty to the Grand Signior, and in confidence of the musti's dispensation. Now I ask thee, Whether it be lawful to commit a thousand vices, that I may only acquit myself fairly in one virtæ ; or to think that in such cases the musti has power to disannul the express positive injunctions of our holy lawgiver ? Is the empire of the faithful to be served by the infidelity and profaneness of infidulmans ? or the truth to be supported by lies and perjuries ?

I tremble to think what a confusion I shall be in when the prophet shall reproach me, that I have preferred the favour of men to the smiles of Heaven. I know not what to do. Oh that I were in the parching deserts of Lybia, or any the most unfrequented solitude of Egypt, a companion of dragons, and other horrid monsters of Afric, rather than in this station, which renders my life a hell upon earth, and torments me with half the disquiets of the damned.

But, if this appears too extravagant and desperate a thought, let me at least wish myself at Fez, the meanest of thy slaves, or of thy incomparable Musu Abul Yahyan, of whom thy last letter gave so high a character. I have addressed a dispatch to him, hoping for the honour of his friendship and correspondence.

Let not the liberty I have taken to tell thee of my sadness discourage thee from writing ; but rest assured, that whenever thou shalt vouchsafe me a letter, though I were in the agonies of death, it would call me back again.

Paris, 25th of the 9th Moon, of the year 1659.

IV.—*To the KAIMACHAM.*

THESE Nazarenes are very fertile in new religions. Europe is a wilderness over-run with monstrous sects and heresies; every age produces fresh pretenders to prophecy and divine revelation; error is prolific, and multiplies infinitely, whilst truth remains the same for ever, and is comprehended in a few rules.

Of late years there are a sort of people sprung up in England, Holland, Germany, and other parts of the North, boasting of a new commission given them from Heaven to preach the everlasting truth, reform the errors and vices of mankind, and lead people the only infallible way to happiness. Their address is plain and simple, bold and uniform, using no other ceremonies or compliments in their discourse or carriage to persons of the greatest quality than to the vulgar, and those of the most inferior rank.

They style themselves, The true seed, the offspring of Jacob, Jews of the promise, Israelites without fraud, with such like vain titles; but by others they are generally called Quakers.

They say the ringleader of this people professes himself to be the Messiah, being in all parts of his body, and features of his face, like Jesus the Son of Mary; or, at least, it is observed, that he exactly resembles that portraiture of him which Publius Lentulus sent to the senate of Rome out of Judea, when he was governor of that province. Hence his followers scruple not to call him Jesus, the beauty of ten thousand, the only begotten Son of God, the prophet who is to seal up all things, the prince of peace, king of Israel, judge, consolation, and hope of the world.

When he travels, his disciples attend him bareheaded,

(which thou knowest is a token of reverence among the Franks) yet they never uncover to any other mortal. He rides on horseback, whilst they walk on foot before, behind, and on each side of him, spreading their garments in the way through which he passes. The hoofs of his beast tread only on silks, or other costly stuffs; and as they enter any town or city, they chant aloud his praises, proclaiming him the Son of David, and heir of the divine promises.

All his followers pretend to be prophets, boasting of strange illuminations and raptures, foretelling things to come, and reproaching the vices of governors, and the greatest princes, with a boldness which has but few precedents. In a word, they every where preach, that God is laying the foundation of a new monarchy, which shall destroy all the rest in the world, and shall never have an end itself.

This gives a jealousy to the states where they live, and therefore they are persecuted in all places; yet they appear very constant in their sufferings, and tenacious of the doctrines they preach.

They seem, in my opinion, to resemble one of our musulman sects, who assert, that Jesus the Son of Mary shall return again upon earth; that he shall marry and beget children, be anointed King of the nations who believe in one God, and in this glorious state shall reign forty years; after which he shall subdue Antichrist, and then shall follow the dissolution of all things. Yet the orthodox believers reject this tenet as fabulous; neither is there any countenance given to it in that versicle of the Alcoran, where it is said, "Thou Mahomet shalt see thy Lord return in the clouds;" since that only intimates the glorious descent which Moses, Jesus, and Mahomet shall make, from paradise, with Enoch, Elias, and the one

hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets, to assemble the elect at the day of judgment.

If thou wouldest have my opinion of these new religionists in Europe, and their leader, I take him to be an impostor, and his followers to be either fools or madmen; even just such another crew as those who followed Mohammedans, in the days of our holy lawgiver. This was an Arabian impostor, who pretended to set up for a prophet, and attempted to compose a book like the Alcoran; but he was infatuated with a vain arrogance, and there was no truth or elegance in his writings, no justice on his side, nor understanding in him or his party: To be short, both he and they were all cut to pieces in the Vale of Akreb, by the troops of Abu-Bacrossadic, the first caliph.

As to these modern seducers, they are not men of *assas*, but a herd of silly insignificant people, aiming rather to heap up riches in obscurity, than to acquire a fame by an heroic undertaking: They are generally merchants or mechanics, and are observed to be very punctual in their dealings, men of few words in a bargain, modest and composed in their deportment, temperate in their lives, and using great frugality in all things. In a word, they are singularly industrious, sparing no labour or pains to increase their wealth; and so subtle and inventive, that they would, if possible, extract gold out of ashes. I know none that excel them in these characters but the Jews and the Banians; the former being the craftiest of all men, and the latter so superlatively cunning, that they will over-reach the devil.

But these are no signs of a pure religion, for that only prescribes the methods of withdrawing and separating the soul from the contagion of earthly things, and of uniting it to the Deity, which is its source.

Illustrious Kaimacham, I bid thee adieu; praying, that thou and I may at last meet in that centre of all things, after our various epicycles and excursions in this lower world.

Paris, 15th of the 11th Moon, of the Year 1659.

V.—*To the same.*

I SENT a dispatch some moons past to the cadefquer of Romefi, guardian of the imperial canons, interpreter of the laws of equity, wherein I informed him of the advances that were made in order to a peace between France and Spain. Now I can assure thee that peace is concluded, and the articles signed on both sides by the two plenipotentiaries.

I need not repeat what I particularly related to that grandee; my letters are all published in the divan, and registered; yet it will not be unwelcome perhaps to thee, to hear with what niceness of punctilio these infidel ministers met to accomplish an affair, whereon depends the interest and honour of their respective masters, the happiness of the two kingdoms, and the general bias of all the West.

There is a little island formed by the river Bidasson, called the Isle of Pheasants, through the middle of which a line is drawn, which exactly separates the territories of both monarchs. This place was agreed on for the interview of the two ministers. Each had his bridge to enter the island in that part which belonged to his master, and over the line of separation was erected a large divan or council-room, to be entered only by two private doors, one out of Cardinal Mazarin's lodgings, raised on the French side of the council-room, the other out of

Don Louis d'Aro's apartment, built on the Spanish side.

Each of these ministers was accompanied by several princes and grandees of the court, and above sixty other persons of quality, with a guard of four hundred horse and foot, to secure their bridges, and the place of conference. In a word, things were managed with so much moderation and good success, that the Marechal de Gramont was sent ambassador extraordinary into Spain, and received at that court with infinite civilities and honour.

The subject of his negotiation was to treat of a match between the King his master and the Infanta of Spain. His conduct and address were such as soon procured the Catholic King's consent; and from that time the Marechal approached the Infanta with more than ordinary submissions, esteeming her now as the Queen of France. Soon after this the nuptial contract and the peace were mutually signed, to the immense joy of the subjects of both sides, who were very glad to exchange the toils and calamities of war for the sweets and profits of peace.

It will be needless to insert here all the articles on which they agreed: Two will be worth the knowledge of the supreme divan; and those are, the release of Charles Duke of Lorraine, on the Spanish King's side, and, on the part of the King of France, the restoration of the Prince of Conde to the free possession and enjoyment of all his estates, honours, dignities, and privileges, as the first prince of the royal blood, with the government of the provinces of Bourgoigne and Bresse.

A little before these articles were signed, the young Prince of Spain died suddenly, not having seen twelve moons. I mentioned the birth of this royal infant in one of my letters, and the extraordinary solemnities that were made thereupon by the King of Spain, and his ambassa-

dors at foreign courts. These infidels appear in all things too passionately affected with the glories of our mortal state, which at the height are but transient shadows, or something less considerable.

I am amazed at the bold rebellion of the bassa of Aleppo, and that he should endeavour to cheat the empire with so stale an imposture as a sham son of Amurat; yet it seems he made a considerable progress under this pretence. Some were glad of novelty, others were frightened out of their allegiance; whilst only a few served his interest in pure discontent, and hopes to amend their fortune. The country people are generally oppressed by their governors, and it is no wonder if they take up arms for one that promises to deliver them from their calamities. This is the usual pretext of all innovations in the state. The soldiers are also defrauded of their due pay, and then they are ready to fight under the next general that brings most money with him. Neither are there wanting malecontents among the grandees at such times to foment and abet an insurrection.

All these events proceed from the ill conduct of the supreme ministers, who alone are responsible for the miscarriages of the state.

Illustrious Kaimachan, the frame of the Ottoman government is out of order: I wish fate does not pull it in pieces, as a necessary step to its amendment. Adieu.

Paris, 2d of the last Moon, of the Year 1659.

VI.—*To HAMET, Reis Effendi, Principal Secretary of the Ottoman Empire.*

I wish thee all imaginable joy of thy new dignity, yet question whether thou or thy predecessor be the happier

man. It is a vast honour indeed, and attended with immense profit, to serve in this station the most high, most potent, and most invincible monarch on earth; but, at the same time, there is infinite toil and fatigue in it, with abundance of perils; from all which the fortunate Muzlu is now delivered, and they are become thy portion.

As for him, I cannot but esteem him happy, in that he has got permission to retire to his country-seat, out of the crowd and noise of the city, and from the stifling businesses of state, which choak the more innocent and natural delights of the soul. Now he is fully restored to the elements, and to himself, whereas before the perpetual hurry of the court made him in part a stranger to both; for there a man insensibly loses acquaintance with his own most intimate affections; his spirit is alienated amidst the multiplicity of his concerns; it is stretched on the rack of ten thousand cares and inquietudes; it is divided, shattered, and rent in pieces.

Besides, were he as free from these distracting thoughts as a Santone, yet the very necessity of living always in a city, was enough to render him miserable; for I esteem such a confinement no better than a prison at large, and not far from being buried alive.

It is true, Constantinople has the advantage of all the cities in the world, for the delightfulness of its situation, the houses being so pleasantly intermixed with fair gardens, and the streets refreshed with cool breezes from the sea. It looks at a distance like a town in a wood, or one may term it a forest composed of minarets and cypresses. The terraces afford agreeable prospects of the neighbouring fields and mountains; and it is pleasant to stand on the water-side, and view the innumerable variety of boats and vessels sailing from one port to another, with all the other diversions on the sea, and the beautiful

mixture of palaces and groves, chïoses and gardens, seraglios and villages, which grace the opposite shore. O queen of cities, mistress of kingdoms, glory of nations, commandress and sanctuary of the whole earth! Thrice happy should I count myself, if I might have the favour to reside within thy venerable walls, and exchange the polluted society of infidels for that of true believers.

How often do I languish to see the glittering crescents, the triumphant ensigns of the Ottomans on the tops of the minarets in the imperial city! How often do I wish myself prostrate on the carpets of the sacred mosqués, in the devout assemblies of the faithful, adoring the Eternal in the perfection of sanctity! Whereas now I am forced to go into the temples of idolaters, to kneel and bow down before stocks and statues, to join seemingly with unbelievers, and pray to that which has no life, nor sense, nor power.

How do I envy the blessed state of the meanest artisan in Constantinople, who daily feeds on the wholesome pilaw of the East, and drinks the delectable sherbets, or waters tingured with the rich fruits of Greece? Whereas I am compelled to eat meats forbidden by our holy prophet, and to render my soul execrable, by an impure and profane diet, or I must starve; for these uncircumcised are more abominable than ravens and vultures, to whom the most filthy carrion is a dainty: And, to cloak their uncleanness, they corrupt their own gospel, and forge a toleration from the Messias himself, as if that holy prophet, who in every the least tittle obeyed the law of Moses, and set himself as an example for his followers to imitate, could be guilty of contradicting those divine precepts, and running counter to his own practice, in recommending uncleanness and libertinism. No; the admirable Son of Mary was the most temperate and abste-

mious man in the world, and both in his words and actions preached up those virtues to others, having often expressly declared to his disciples, "That he came not to abolish the law, but to refine and perfect it."

He was circumcised on the eighth day after his nativity, according to the injunction of Moses, and the constant practice of the sons of Israel. In a word, through the whole course of his life, he never deviated from the traditions of his fathers, the seniors of the house of Jacob.

It is true, he frequently argued against the many trivial superstitions of the Pharisees, who evacuated the more essential points of the law, by superinducing a number of insignificant ceremonies; but he never opened his mouth against any positive precept, such as were those which limited the choice they were to make of meats, distinguishing the impure from the clean. Yet the Christians delude themselves with a false belief that he gave them a dispensation to eat any thing, without caution or reserve.

Hence it is that they defile themselves with swine's flesh, and creeping things, and blood is in all their dishes. They scruple not to eat of that which died of itself, and banquet as freely with what was knocked down or strangled, as we would do with the flesh of a beast that was killed in pronouncing the name of God. The shambles here afford no other provision but such as this; and he that will not eat that which is an abomination to a muselman, must be contented with herbs. This I reckon as one of the greatest of my misfortunes, and it makes me burn with desire to return to Constantinople.

Yet, after all, I should think myself far more happy, if I might have the liberty to spend the rest of my days in my native country; so great an admirer I am of a rural life and solitude: And it is for this reason I count thy

predecessor a happy man, in having the privilege of a sweet retirement, where he may take breath from the vain impertunity and bustle of mortals.

In the mean time, there is a species of felicity in thy employment; and thou can'st not be called miserable, so long as thou acquittest thyself fairly, and enjoyest the favour of thy sovereign.

I perceive by thy letters that thou art curious to know the characters of foreign states, with the various interests of Nazarene princes, the intrigues of these western courts, their overtures of peace and war, and the different laws, maxims, and customs by which the people are governed. Thy conversation with ambassadors at the Porte will furnish thee with abundance of useful remarks in this kind; but, since thou requirest me to send my observations, I will hereafter obey thy commands in successive letters, for this is too large a theme for one dispatch.

At present, thou mayest receive and register for true news, that the peace between France and Spain has been signed by both kings, and solemnly published throughout their territories, with inexpressible joy and magnificence. It is certain also, that the King of Sweden is dead, and the Duke of Orleans, uncle to the French king, which has in some measure qualified the mirth of the French on this occasion. Assuredly human affairs are equally chequered with good and evil: Bliss comes not to us in pure unmixed streams; death keeps an even pace, and knocks as boldly at the gates of kings as at the cottages of the meanest slaves.

It is the part of a wise man to be always resigned to Heaven, and prepared for the worst events; as for the best, they never come amiss.

Paris, 17th of the 3d Moos, of the Year 1660.

VII.—To DGNET OGLOV.

SHALL I converse with thee, as Horace used to do with his friends over a glass of generous wine? Let us lay aside masks for a while, and discourse with open souls. I believe thou hast as equal a veneration for our holy prophet as I, and hast been educated in all the tendernesses of piety, the niceties of divine love, as our mollahs are pleased to call it. We have been both of us careful to rise before the sun, and say our orisons every morning in a demi-trance, that is, half asleep and half awake. This, no doubt, is a necessary point of piety; and we have been no less solicitous in observing the other four hours of prayer; either of us would have counted it an irreligious negligence, if we had seen a piece of paper on the ground, and had not stooped to take it up, with reverence wiping off the dirt, and kissing the tabula rasa on which men use to write the name of God; as if it were not an equal argument of respect, to secure from profanation sticks, stones, rags, or any thing whereon it were possible to engrave or print the all-mysterious characters; nay, or the very sands themselves, which, as some say, were the first books on earth. However, if they were not the first, we are sure that, in very early ages, men used to stamp their memoirs, or draw them out in perceptible figures on the surface of the earth; witness the old shipwrecked philosopher, who being cast ashore in an unknown land, soon traced out the manners of the people, by certain mathematical impressions which he found in the sands; for he concluded these to be the very footsteps of humanity and virtue. But to return to the business of religion: We have been obedient to the instructions of our fathers and tutors, zealous in observing every punctilio of traditional piety; we have fasted, prayed, washed, and given alms at the

appointed seasons, and in the manner prescribed by the law. All these, I own, are commendable exercises, but methinks they are not the solid and substantial parts of true religion. I hate hypocrisy, and the devout wantonness of those who think to mock God with ceremonies and empty forms. It were much better to mix with the idolatrous rites of Bacchus, (if they deserve that epithet) and rant in honour of eternal wine, talk reputed blasphemy, and reform the model of the universe; I say, I would choose to do all this, and more, rather than cheat myself with empty hopes of gaining paradise, for acting to the life the shams of pious mimicry.

I would not have thee think that what I have now said proceeds from any contempt of the Eternal Majesty.

By those fair heavens above, and all the immortal spangles of the sky, I swear there is not a faculty in Mahmut's soul which is not filled with gratitude and veneration, which does not burn with flames of sacred love to the adorable Fountain of all things. In a word, I only strive to rescue my friend from the attempts of pious frauds, the religious burlesques of our mollahs and muftis.

Believe, my dear Dgnet, that there is a God, a first cause, a just judge, presiding over the world; believe also his prophet, the holy, the beloved Mahomet, the minion, as I may say, of the Omnipotent; but have some faith also for the rest of his messengers and favourites: Let not Hali be thought of without some inward flurries of devotion; he was a mussulman, and the fourth caliph, though his followers be damned heretics in our divinity. Had right taken place, perhaps he had been the first of the vicars, but his cause was superseded by his absence: Let him and that rest till the final inquisition; and acknowledge that I have said too little for a schiai, and not too much for a sunni.

I know no reason also why we should not reverence the memoirs of Mercury, Orpheus, Cadmus, Meliffus, Faunus, and the rest of the ancient sages and lawgivers, who instructed the nations of the earth in the mysteries of religion, taught them to adore one supreme God, to believe the immortality of the soul, and to practise good works.

What though the ceremonies of their worship were different from ours, and perhaps polluted with an unjustifiable adoration of images? What though their altars reeked with the blood of slain beasts, and sometimes smoked even with human sacrifices? These barbarous rites were not instituted by the first oracles of religion, illuminated souls, nuncios from God to this lower world; but they were afterwards superinduced, through the corruption of times, the avarice of priests, and the superstition of the people; and, for aught we know, our own historians have not been impartial in relating the truth.

There is an innate envy between people of different families and nations. Both we and our fathers, that descend from Abraham by Ismael, and the Jews, who are his posterity by Isaac, have been too favourable to the offspring of that beloved of God. We generally entertain and cherish a specific pride on the score of our illustrious pedigree; especially the Jews, who will not allow any people on earth to be their equals, either in point of antiquity, the nobility of their race, or the innumerable multitude of their brethren; whereas they consider not that they are dispersed up and down over the whole earth, like sheep without a shepherd, not permitted to possess a cubit of land which they can call their own; contemned, hated, and made a proverbial scoff among all nations; infamous vagabonds, usurers, slaves, and pimps to other mens pleasures; men of no fame or character; finally, in their present circumstances, the most spurious and ignoble of all

the sons of Adam, except the Kaffars of Ethiopia, who feed on the guts and dung of beasts.

It is true, indeed, their ancestors made a considerable figure in the world, in the days of Solomon, and other victorious kings, during their possession of Palestine ; and yet in those very times they were often humbled and led away into captivity, by the more fortunate kings of Babylon, Persia, and Assyria, and afterwards subdued by the Grecians ; till at last they were totally ruined, their cities laid waste, their temple burnt to ashes, and their country quite dispeopled by the Romans.

If we ascend yet higher, to their celebrated migration out of Egypt, of which their own historians make such a noise, and tell so many fabulous wonders, we shall find a very mean and contemptible character given of them by Egyptian writers, and those other nations, men of as great authority as Josephus, or any other Jewish historian. Manethos, a priest of Egypt, calls them a crew of leprous and nasty people, and says they were expelled the country by Amenophis, then reigning, and driven into Syria, their captain being Moses, an Egyptian priest. A like relation we have from Chæremon, an author of good credit among the Greeks, who tells us, that in the reign of Amenophis, two hundred and fifty thousand lepers were forcibly banished out of Egypt, under the conduct of Tifthen and Petefeth (i. e. Moses and Aaron.) And though other writers differ in the name of the king then reigning in Egypt, yet all agree in asserting the Israelites to be a nasty sort of people, over-run with scabs and infectious biles, and that they were esteemed the scum and filth of the nation. Tacitus, a Roman writer of unquestionable authority, adds, that Moses, one of the exiled lepers, being a man of wit and reputation among them, when he saw the grief and confusion of his brethren, bid them be

of good cheer, and neither trust the gods, or men of Egypt, but only confide in him, and obey his counsel; for that he was sent from Heaven to be their conductor out of this calamity, and to protect them from all their enemies; upon which the people, not knowing what course to take, surrendered themselves wholly to his disposal; from which time he became their captain and lawgiver, leading them through the deserts of Arabia, where they committed great rapine and spoil, putting man, woman, and child to the sword, burning their cities, and laying all things desolate. Dear Dgnet, what could be said worse of a company of robbers and banditti?

Moses is gone to paradise, and when I mention his name, it is with a profound reverence, for he was the greatest of the ancient prophets. Yet give me leave to have some regard for my own reason: He was but a mortal as well as I, and without doubt was not exempt from human frailties; he had the advantage to be educated in the college of the royal priests at Memphis, which none of his nation could boast of besides himself. Suffer me to tell thee my thoughts frankly, and without disguise: Magic and astrology were the only sciences then in vogue; and he being perfectly versed in all the mysteries and secrets of Egyptian wisdom, it was no hard task for him to possess the rude and ignorant sons of Jacob with a profound attach and veneration for his person, and in that distressed condition, to mould their flexible spirits to what discipline he pleased.

Suspect me not for an infidel or an atheist, because I discourse with this freedom. I have heard some of our mollahs say a great deal more in their private conversation; and it is a superstitious timorousness not to be bold in the exercise of our reason, which taught even the pro-

phet Moses himself the method of conquest, and getting a fame which should know no end.

I am not ambitious, nor would I tempt thee to aspire at an undue grandeur; but let us not be less than ourselves, that is, men. There is no reason we should be imposed upon by fabulous reports of interested and designing writers, or that we should give faith to every credulous fool. Doubtless there were many nations established on earth before the Israelites, and great prophets, who were not of the lineage of Abraham. The date of the olympiads is much more certain to a day, nay, to an hour, than the hegira of the Israelites, since the former is demonstrated by the eclipses of the sun and moon, interwoven by the Gentile historians in the body of their history; whereas the latter is defective in this material point, and is exposed to a thousand disputes among writers.

My friend, let not thou and I trouble ourselves with needless controversies, or be zealous for things of no moment; but, adoring one God, and believing what is rational, we may possess our souls in tranquillity and peace.

Paris, 11th of the 5th Moon, of the Year 1660.

VIII.—*To the KAIMACHAM.*

At length, after a long alienation, the Prince of Conde is restored to the king's favour, for which he is obliged to the King of Spain. I have already intimated in one of my letters, that this was agreed on in the treaty of peace between these two crowns, as an article equivalent to that of the Duke of Lorraine's release, solicited by the King of France. Now it is put in execution, and the rebel prince is received with abundance of caresses by the king, queen-mother, Cardinal Mazarini, and the whole court.

He is counted the valiantest man of this age, and was so pronounced long ago by the Marechal Turenne, who is a soldier of no mean character, both for his judgment and courage. He was once extremely beloved by all the French; but his wildness and inconstancy, with the destructive effects of the civil wars which he raised, changed their affections for a while into indifference, coldness, and ill-will; but now all is well again.

He and his brother the Prince of Conti seldom agreed, being often the heads of contrary parties during the minority of this king; and the younger being crump-shouldered, Conde used to be a little sarcastic upon him, threatening to shave his uncourtly back into the fashion with his sword.

It is certain the Prince of Conde was very wild and profuse when young, but now he begins to take soberer measures. During his father's life he was called the Duke of Enguien. And, to reflect on the parsimony of the old prince, he used to take several handfuls of gold with one hand, and fill a purse, saying, "This is my father's practice." Then he would turn the purse upside down with the other hand, and scattering the gold among his favourites, would add, "This is my humour."

Once as he was passing on foot through a town in France, under his father's government, the chief magistrate of the place, who was an old man, met him, and began to make an oration with the best rhetoric he could; but the prince being in a frolicsome humour, took advantage of a very low conge the old gentleman made him, and leaped over his head, and stood still behind him. The magistrate not taking any notice of this wild prank, turned very gravely about, and addressed himself with a new obeisance, but not so low as the former. However, the nimble prince caught him upon the half bent, and setting

his hand upon the old monsieur's shoulders, whipped over again the second time, which quite spoiled his intended speech, to the great diversion of all the spectators.

In his youth he was much addicted to women, and took a particular delight in debauching nuns, which occasioned the queen-mother to reflect on him something satirically once, when he informed her that the Swiss soldiers were guilty of great disorders, some of them getting into the nunneries, and violating the chastity of those consecrated females; for the queen replied, "If you had told me they broke into the wine-cellars, I would believe you, for the Swiss are all known drunkards; but as for amours with nuns, none is so likely to make them as the Duke of Enguien."

However, all that I have said hinders not but that he is now a prudent man, a good general, and fortunate in recovering his sovereign's favour.

In a word, this court is so overjoyed at the marriage of the King with the Infanta of Spain, that they have no room left for peevish resentments. All crimes are forgiven, and the devil himself would be welcome at the wedding, provided he would be debonair and good company.

The nuptials are only celebrated by proxy as yet; but here are vast preparations making for completing the ceremony.

What the issue of this marriage and peace will be, it is not easy to divine; but I doubt the Christians are hatching evil against the Ottoman Porte, in regard all the princes in Europe are coming to an agreement.

Illustrious Kaimacham, let not this intimation pass away as a dream; for I tell thee again, these infidels are plotting of mischief.

Paris, 1st of the 7th Moon, of the Year 166c.

IX.—*To the same.*

I BELIEVE thou wilt now receive from me the earliest news of a mighty change, a surprising revolution in the English government: Know then, that he whom I have so often mentioned under the title of King of the Scots in my former letters, the eldest son and rightful heir of the British kingdoms, Charles II. is restored to the throne of his fathers, without violence or bloodshed, by the unanimous consent and earnest desire of his subjects.

This young prince has been an exile for twelve years in foreign courts, and has heard of as many several alterations in the state of his dominions during his absence, every change producing a new form of government. The rebels had run over all Aristotle's politics, and the various models of Plato, and other philosophers who treated of commonwealths, to find out such patterns as best suited with the necessities and genius of that nation: There is not a species of aristocracy, democracy, and oligarchy, which they did not put in practice, to support the frame of that government, whose basis they had removed, for it was founded on a monarchy of a long and hereditary descent; and therefore all their most artificial contrivances were ineffectual, and they might as well have endeavoured to make buttresses for a castle in the air. In a word, the English found themselves so disjointed and weakened by civil wars, taxes, and the other usual effects of usurpation and tyranny, that they had no other way left to save their nation from utter ruin, but by bringing their lawful king back again, who is the angular stone whereon all their welfare and interest is built.

There is one thing remarkable in this turn of English affairs, that their sovereign landed and made his triumphant entry into that island on the anniversary day of his

birth ; which puts me in mind of what is generally discoursed here at Paris, that on the day of his nativity there was seen a bright star in the heavens when the sun was just above the meridian. From hence the astrologers of those times predicted great things concerning him ; and those of the present age, who have seen his fortunate return to his kingdoms, preface yet greater events to come.

God only knows what embryos are in the womb of futurity, and we Mussulmans have no reason to rejoice at the grandeur of any of these infidel princes. Yet such a sign as that of a star appearing at noon-day, just over the place where a mighty queen was in labour with a prince, has something in it extraordinary, and full of promising circumstances. It was an appearance of this nature which rendered the birth of the Messias so illustrious, though otherwise obscure enough, when the eastern magi, directed by such a star, came and found Mary the mother of Jesus in a stable, and the infant prophet lying in a manger, instead of a cradle. So we are told that eclipses of the sun portend the misfortune or death of great personages, and that all other prodigies, whether in heaven or earth, have their proper signification.

But whether these observations be true or no, it is certain this late banished prince is returned with abundance of splendour and advantage to his native royal possessions ; and I thought it would be a grand neglect in me to let one post-day pass before I gave thee an account of a revolution so astonishing to all Europe, and which is like to give a new turn to the affairs of most Christian princes and states.

Besides, I know there is an ambassador from England residing at the august Porte, which determines the quarrels of all the nations on earth. There are also

abundance of English merchants in the imperial city ; they may have feuds among one another ; the interest of some of them is joined with that of the English rebels ; others are for their king ; therefore, knowing of his restoration, thou wilt be better able to adjust all matters of this nature according to reason, equity, and the honour of the majestic Porte ; for this king makes already a greater figure than any of his progenitors, and therefore his friendship is not to be contemned.

The care of these things rest on thee, who art the vicar's vicar of the vicegerent of God.

Paris, 3d of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1660.

X.—*To MEHEMET, an exiled Eunuch, at Cairo in Egypt.*

OH that I were in one of the pyramids near the city where thou residest, shut up in tremendous darkness, in the most obscure and horrible vault of the royal pile ! that I might converse with the ghosts of Egyptian kings, hug demons in my arms, and run the gerit with hobgoblins, and all the spirits of the night, round the tomb of Cheops, or up and down the dismal galleries, or in the nest of bats, screech-owls, harpies, and the rest of the winged monsters, the excrementitious spawn of human souls, or at least the superfoetation of pickled carcases, repositied there for eternal mummies, some of them before Noah's flood, and the rest after, if the story be true. God knows whether it be or no ; that is nothing to me ; but I have a strong inclination to try what I can find in those antique monuments, after all the search of so many travellers. I have a specific sort of melancholy upon me, which cannot be vented any other way than by keeping company with the dead, or having ten hundred

thousand ugly rampant spirits dancing their infernal measures about me, and grinning like baboons of hell. O God! how it would set me a-laughing! An entertainment of this nature would ease my spleen, and restore me to a good humour.

Are there no beings extant but those which are every day exposed to our senses? or is nature poorer than the imagination of a mortal, which can form the ideas of an infinity of creatures that he never saw? I am cloyed with the crambo of objects and joys which these narrow elements afford, and therefore would fain grope out some new and untried world to find refreshment in.

But oh, my Mehemet, when I look toward the heavens, and behold the moon and stars; when my eye is lost in the boundless firmament, and my soul can find no limits to the universe; then I sink into myself, full of humility and confusion, because I have injuriously reproached the Omnipotent, and cast obloquies on his works; for all things appear admirably beautiful and perfect, and the least atom is large enough to afford apartments for a thousand souls. Every thing in nature is pregnant and full of pleasing wonders; yet I cannot be free from these hypochondriac fits at certain seasons. I am sometimes the saddest and most melancholy man in the world; I take all things by the wrong handle, look on them through false optics, and yet persuade myself I am in the right, and see them in their true complexion. Such is the fatal saphistry of this black and sullen passion, it takes away the gust and relish of the sweetest enjoyments; and if the contagion could possibly find admittance among the blessed above, surely it would render their paradise a hell, and would afford some ground for the fiction of the ancient poets, who brought up the use of *sepenthe* among

the gods, to appease their choler, and put them in a good humour.

I know not what that drink was ; but I tell thee, my repenthe is a glass of good Languedoc wine, which is as rich, and far more delicious than the wines of Tenedos and Mitylene. I once could boast of another method to subdue my melancholy, by giving battle to my thoughts in open field ; but now I am fain to have recourse to stratagems and ambuscades, trepanning the ugly hideous monsters out of their strong intrenchments and fastnesses in the spleen, by generous frolics with wine, women, and music. I bury all care in profound sleep, the effect of brisk and free drinking ; and then I awake as merry as a lark, as young as if I had been in Medea's cauldron.

What signifies it to pretend sanctity in our words and exterior carriage, whilst at the same time we are ready to burst with malice, pride, ambition, avarice, and a thousand more vices ? Whereas wine, seasonably drank, cures all these distempers of the soul, makes a miser liberal, a cruel man tender, a spiteful fellow kind ; melts stiff and haughty spirits into a wonderful softness and complaisance ; in fine, it makes a lamb of a lion, and changes a vulture to a dove, purifying and transforming souls into a temper wholly divine.

Why then should we be tied to laws of morality, never practised by those who made them ? All the philosophers were boon companions, and our holy prophet himself privately drank the juice of the grape ; our emperors and great ones do the same. The only reason why they forbid it to their subjects is, lest they should grow too wise, and strive to shake off the yoke ; for wine elevates the spirits, emboldens the heart, and transforms a slave to a lord, in his own conceit... For want of this liquor, all nations where the vine grows not have found out one he-

verage or another, as efficacious to relieve melancholy, and drive away sorrow from the heart. The Chinese make wine of rice: In my country they have another intoxicating drink compounded with certain roots: The same is used in some parts of Persia: In these western provinces, they brew divers sorts of strong liquors of wheat, barley, honey, molasses, and other ingredients; and they make wine of apples, pears, cherries, currants, and most fruits that grow. I tell thee, my friend, there is no living, unless we sometimes give nature a new ferment, to rouse her from her lees.

Yet let us practise a due mediocrity, remembering that God gave us these things for our health and refreshment, and not for our bane. In a word, Mehemet, let us be merry and wise.

Paris, 26th of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1660.

XI.—To HAMET, *Reis Effendi*, *Principal Secretary of the Ottoman empire.*

I HAVE taken some pains, turned over a great many memoirs of old courtiers, and conversed with not a few now living, who can remember the days of Henry IV. that so I may comply with thy order, and oblige thee with some remarks on the life of that prince, who, though he had but a little body, yet, like another Alexander, had so vast a soul, and performed such illustrious actions, as deservedly fastened on him the title of Great, and made him be esteemed the arbiter of all Europe.

It is observed of him, that he was always unfortunate in his wives; yet they relate a pretty passage of his first wife, Margaret of Valois, which seems to contradict that remark.

He was then a protestant, and only King of Navarre, when the famous massacre of Paris was committed, with design to murder him among the rest of his religion; but being aware of this, when he heard the assassins making toward his chamber, where he sat with the queen, he hid himself under her garments, as she sat in a chair. The villains rushing in, asked for the king: She, with a great assurance of spirit, told them, "He went out from her in a passion." They, seeming satisfied, went away without doing any farther hurt; which occasioned a common jest, "That Queen Margaret's smoke saved King Henry's life."

This woman was called the Minerva and Venus of France, on the score of her learning and amours, never denying any thing to her lovers, and being seldom without men of science in her company. In a word, King Henry looked on himself as a noted cuckold, and so gave her a bill of divorce. Her own mother, Katherine de Medicis, was called the Fourth Fury of Hell.

It is recorded of this lady, that she practised much with wizards and magicians, who in an enchanted glass showed her who should reign in France for the time to come. First appeared this Henry IV. then Lewis XIII. next Lewis XIV. and after him a pack of jesuits, who should abolish the monarchy, and govern the nation themselves. This glass is to be seen in the king's palace to this day.

As for Henry IV.'s second wife, it is said he never enjoyed a peaceable hour with her but when she was asleep. They often fought together, and she spared not sometimes to beat and scratch him even in his bed, so that he has been forced to quit the field, and take sanctuary in another chamber. This prince was taxed with ingratitude towards his most faithful servants, and want of liberality to all. It was a common saying of his predecessor Hen-

ry III. "That he shared his kingdom with his loyal servants and friends:" But Henry IV. loved not to part with any thing which he could handsomely keep.

Yet he was very obliging to his mistresses, and his passion for them carried him into many irregularities. He was so deeply enamoured of one, that, to enjoy her, he signed a promise of marriage to her with his own blood, which one of his favourites seeing, tore the paper in pieces. The king being incensed at that, swore by the belly of St Gris, (an ordinary oath with him) that this person was mad. "Yes, (replied he) but I wish I were the only madman in the kingdom;" thereby reflecting on the king's extravagancy. Another time he gave fifty thousand crowns for one night's enjoyment of a lady.

I have many years ago spoke of the death of this prince in my letters to the ministers of the Porte. Now I will acquaint thee with one circumstance to which I was then a stranger.

It happened that the viceroy of Navarre was walking with several nobles in the meadows of Berne, a town under his jurisdiction, washed by the river Pau; when, on a sudden, all the cows (of which there was a great number in those fields) ran violently into the river, and were there drowned. The viceroy being astonished at this, as at a prodigy, writ down the day and hour when it happened, which proved exactly the very same time to a minute when Henry IV. was stabbed in his coach by Ravailac, as the viceroy was soon certified, by dispatches which he received from the court, containing intelligence of that tragedy.

All this may be pure chance, for aught I know, but there are abundance of symptoms of something else. As for man, he is wholly a stranger to himself, and the secret operations of his own soul are hid from him. How

then can he know the nature of other things, or be familiarly acquainted with the occult dispositions of beasts? The least worm or insect baffles our severest scrutiny, and we are lost in the speculation of their embryos; the most silent and inanimate beings proclaim aloud the folly of our boasted science; every atom in nature ridicules our best philosophy. Who then will pretend to unriddle the more uncommon mysteries of providence, or trace the footsteps of eternal destiny? Historians speak variously of this paricide. Some say the villain was approved of at the court of Rome, and that he was there ranked in the number of martyrs. It is certain he underwent as horrible a death as the wit of man could invent, to punish his matchless treason; and it seems the judges that examined him were either afraid or ashamed to divulge what they heard from his mouth, obliging themselves by an oath to eternal secrecy. Ravailac himself owned that he had twice before attempted to kill the king, but was thrust back by one of his nobles, who suspected some ill design in his looks.

Sage Hamet, may God preserve our glorious sultan from the rage of mutineers, from a Jewish physician, and from the common disasters of human life; and the care of his attendants will prevent the sudden strokes of a desperate assassin.

Paris, 26th of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1660.

XII.—*To MUSTAPHA, Berber Aga.*

THIS city is now as full of noise and lights as some cities of Asia are at an eclipse of the moon, or as Constantinople is during the Fast of Ramezan. It is near midnight, and yet here is such a medley of noises, com-

pounded of the loud acclamations of mortals, the ringing of bells, beat of drums, sound of trumpets, and other musical instruments, with the thunder of sky-rockets, guns, and other fire-works, that a body would think one's self in a battle or a siege.

The occasion of all this is, the public entry of the new-married king and queen, it being the first time they have seen Paris since the nuptials. Neither my tongue or pen are able to express to the life the inimitable pomp and magnificence that have appeared to-day in the royal train, and in the preparations which the city made to receive them. The lustre of gold, silver, and precious stones, dazzled one's eyes from all parts; and I could have wished for a mussulman army to have been at the plunder of such immense riches; yet there were forty thousand of the citizens and king's guards in arms to augment the glory of the day.

The monarch with his royal spouse appeared seated on a majestic throne, all glittering with gold and diamonds. It was raised on high, and there were several steps or degrees to ascend up to it: On these were placed the princes of the blood, the dukes and peers of the realm, with other grandees and nobles, as also princesses, duchesses, and ladies of the first quality.

It was at the foot of this throne there were made innumerable speeches and congratulatory addresses by the priests and monks of all orders, by the students in the academy, and by the several companies of tradesmen: But that which was most surprising, a certain strange maid uttered several orations in Latin, Greek, French, and Spanish, wherein she magnified the king's heroic undertakings, his wonderful successes, great wisdom, and courage, with other virtues, which she made the subject of her panegyric. She also no less extolled the queen's

matchless beauty, the greatness of her birth, the royal endowments of her mind, and concluded with reflecting on the joy of all Europe for this illustrious match, and alliance of two the most potent crowns in Christendom.

She delivered herself with such an incomparable grace and modesty, as drew the eyes and ears of all that were present; and it is said the king was extremely pleased with her, much more the queen, who had never before encountered so learned a female.

The French ladies have for many years applied themselves to the study of languages and philosophy; but it is not so in Spain, where the men are too rigorous to the fair to allow them that liberty. They are as morose to women as the Moors, from whom a great part of that nation are said to descend. Every country in Europe has suffered mighty changes by the incursions and conquests of the Moors, Goths, Huns, and Vandals; so that it is difficult to trace the original of any people in such a hodge-podge of foreign blood; neither have they any care of their genealogies, as we Arabians have in the East.

Illustrious age, though it signifies nothing to spring of a noble stock, unless we inherit the virtues of our ancestors, as well as their splendid titles and estates, yet it is both profitable and pleasant to have by us a register of our families, that, reading their characters and heroic actions, we may imitate their examples, and add to the glory of the tribe from which we descend.

Paris, 26th of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1660.

XIII.—To D'IGNET OGLOU.

I KNOW not whether I shall finish the letter I begin, or if I do, whether it will be above ground, or in the bowels of the earth. However, I cannot forbear writing to thee, my dear friend, though both the paper and I, with the house wherein I lodge, and all this beautiful city, may, for aught I know, be transported to another region before morning; nay, it is possible this very hour may people Elysium with a new colony from France, and Paris may descend, with all her magnificent palaces, to the shades below, changing the banks of the river Seine for those of Acheron or Styx, and the refreshing airs of Champagne for the choking sulphurs of hell. In a word; we have felt the menaces of a terrible earthquake this evening, but as yet have suffered no damage.

When I lived in Asia, an earthquake was almost as common as the yearly revolutions of summer and winter, and we took as little notice of it as we did of lightning, hail, or rain; besides, one Mussulman encouraged another, and the general faith of true believers confirmed us all, that we ought to be resigned to God, and to the appointments of Eternal Destiny, whether it were for pleasure or pain, good or evil, life or death: But, now I have been so long disused to these convulsions of the globe (for I have not felt one above these two-and-twenty years), and am also separated from the society of the faithful, that I am become like the rest of the world, and even like these infidels, timorous, astonished, void of reason, and of little or no faith.

My mind at first staggered as much as my body, when I was walking across my chamber, and felt the floor rock under me with that singular kind of motion which no human art or force can imitate. I soon concluded it was

an earthquake, but knew not how to bear that thought with indifference. Death is familiar to me in any other figure but that of being so surprisngly buried alive. It appeared horrible to sink on a sudden into an unknown grave, I knew not whither. Perhaps I might fall into some dark lake of water, or, it may be, I might be drenched in a river of fire, or be dashed on a rock; for who can tell the disposition of the caverns below, or what sort of apartments we shall find under the surface of the earth? We walk on the battlements of a marvellous structure, a globe full of tremendous secrets; and whether Nature or Destiny, Providence or Chance, occasion the ruptures that we find are made in divers parts of the earth, it matters not much, so long as we are in danger of tumbling in. Such a terrible fall would put the best philosopher in the world out of humour, and spoil all his reasoning. I am sure it would vex me, thus in a trice to be plundered of my thoughts; which makes me either wonder at the vanity of Empedocles, if he threw himself into the flaming chasm of Mount *Ætna*, only for the sake of being esteemed a god (as the common report is), or gives me reason to conclude he had some other end in his venturous leap, since it is not probable that empty fame could be esteemed by that great sage as his final happiness. A much easier way had Aristotle, who, disgusted at his ignorance of the flux and reflux of the sea, threw himself in, to put an end to his disquisitions, if the story be true; but I can hardly believe the stagyrite was such a fool. I guess of other men according to the experience I have of myself. I am as little solicitous about death as any man, yet I should be unwilling to hurl myself out of the world headlong, without a firm or a test. I love now experiments, but am not very fond of such as take from us irrecoverably the means of trying any more.

We had news here of an earthquake which has overthrown part of the Pyrenean mountains, some days before this happened at Paris, but few regarded it. Calamities at a distance frighten nobody, yet those which we feel put us all in tears. For my part, it has this effect on me, that I am improved in my carelessness, and become fearful of nothing; and I think there is reason on my side, since all my care, apprehension, and forecast, can never defend me from the underminings of the Omnipotent.

Paris, 15th of the 11th Moon, of the Year 1660.

XIV.—*To HAMET, REIS EFFENDI, Principal Secretary of the Ottoman Empire.*

LET not the distance of time between my letters prompt thee to conclude I forget my duty, or that I am careless to oblige so illustrious a friend. I have many obligations to discharge, and therefore endeavour to husband my hours to the best advantage, and so to divide my dispatches, that the Grand Signior may be served, the divan informed of all material emergencies, and the expectations of each minister gratified.

As to the reign of Lewis XIII. it was shared successively between the Marechal d'Ancre, the Duke of Luynes, and Cardinal Richieu. The first was the queen-mother's favourite; the second was the king's; as for the third, he was absolute master both of king, queen, and kingdom.

During the king's minority, indeed, Queen Mary de Medicis, the relict of Henry IV. took the regency into her own hands, and managed things in an arbitrary manner; but the princes of the blood, with other grandees,

not able to brook the government of a woman, conspired against her. Among these were the Prince of Conde, father to the present prince, and the Duke of Bouvillon: The former was a bold man, and durst do any thing that was brave; the latter was a cunning statesman.

They caballed not so privately, but the queen-mother was acquainted with their meetings, and the Duke of Bouvillon was the first who knew his party was betrayed. This intelligence was brought him from assured hands, whilst he was sitting with the Prince of Conde and other nobles at the place of their private rendezvous; whereupon he acquainted them with it, exhorting all to abscond immediately, lest they should be seized on the spot: But they retorting, that the queen would not venture on an action of such dubious consequence, he started up, and took his leave of them, with these words, "My lords, you may follow your own counsel; I will immediately to horse, and escape to Sedan in my stockings, where, if they make me wear out a pair as an exile, by Heavens I will make them wear out a thousand pair of boots."

His words came to pass, and the effect was a diminutive civil war, when the queen was forced to raise an army to reduce this prince to obedience, the rest of his party being imprisoned as soon as she heard of his flight.

Whilst these disturbances lasted, the Moors were expelled out of Spain, to the number of six hundred thousand. Part of those who lived toward the maritime coasts went by sea into Afric; the rest, whose residence was farther within land, sought a passage over the Pyrenean mountains, and so through the southern provinces of France, offering a ducat a-head to the viceroy of Navarre for their safe conduct. He, out of curiosity, coming to see these travellers, and beholding them ragged and almost naked, with visages like ghosts, took pity on

them, and gave them liberty of passage gratis, saying, "God forbid I should extort so much money from these miserable wretches, who are abandoned to the wide world."

But it seems his compassion was needless; for these mussulmans were too cunning for him, having their squalid, torn garments, quilted all over with gold and precious stones; which occasioned all people to ridicule the viceroy's easiness, and to call him the friend of the Gibeonites.

I should appear too partial in reflecting satirically on this prince, whose generosity deserves praise; yet I cannot but smile at the craft of the Moors, whereby they not only escaped paying the accustomed tributes of passengers, but also blinded these infidels, and took from them the suspicion of greater riches, which, if they had once known, perhaps not a Moor should have carried a piece of money along with him into Afric.

This passage seemed worthy of thy knowledge, since it in part resembles the famous departure of the Israelites out of Egypt, though it comes short of the robbery and plunder which they committed on the inhabitants the day before they began their journey. However, this story may afford thee some divertisement.

As to the Marechal d'Ancre, the queen's favourite, in his life and death he was compared to Sejanus, being qualified with the like virtues and vices, and having much the same fortune; his body, after having been dragged about the streets by the rabble, was at last torn to pieces.

If thou wouldst know how the Duke of Luines obtained the king's favour, it was by ingratitude; for when he and his brother were first brought to Court, they were both so poor, that they had but one cloak between them, and for that reason could not go abroad together; yet,

being recommended to the king by a certain nobleman for excellent falconers, they were received into favour; but they abused the kindness of their patron, and, insinuating malicious things into the king's ear against the nobleman and his family, caused him to be banished from the court; after which they managed all things.

Then succeeded Cardinal Richlieu in the chief ministry, of whom I have said a great deal in my former letters to the grandees of the Porte, and thou wilt find them in the register. I will now add what I never mentioned before, that he was very ambitious to be thought a good judge of verse. He gave to one poet, for a witty conceit on his coat of arms, two thousand sequins, though it was but a verse of seven words; another he promoted to an ecclesiastic dignity worth a thousand a-year, for comparing him to the *primum mobile*; but he caused a third to be kicked out of doors for his obstinacy in denying to alter a word of his poem which the cardinal disliked.

This minister was very revengeful, and, amongst other effects of his temper, none was more taken notice of or reflected on than the death of Monsieur de Thou, whom the cardinal cut off for no other reason but because his father, in a general history which he wrote, had represented one of Richlieu's ancestors under a very ignominious and abominable figure. That historian was the renowned Thuanus, of whom I suppose thou hast heard.

As to King Lewis XIII. himself, he was esteemed a great dissembler, accustomed to caress those with more than ordinary endearments whom he designed suddenly to ruin; whence it grew to a proverb in his time, at the French court, when they saw any nobleman smiled on, to say, "His business is done." It cannot be denied that this prince had a great spirit, and some wisdom; yet

he was observed to take delight in many petty actions unbecoming royal majesty. He would spend much of his time in painting, and send for the most famous masters in that art to view his works: An equal inclination he showed to music; and sometimes he was ambitious to be thought a good cook. Once he made a great patty with his own hands, filling it with venison only fit for the mouths of infidels, viz. the flesh of dogs, wolves, and foxes, with other abominable animals, of which it is not lawful for a true believer to taste. This he caused to be served up to table, at a feast which he made to some of his courtiers, who, to honour the king's handiwork, eat greedily of the horrid dish, and highly praised his skill, whilst he diverted himself with laughing at them. He had many other such freaks as these, which rendered him contemptible and ridiculous to the grandees of his kingdom. In a word, he was more revered abroad than at home; and this was owing to the conduct of Cardinal Richlieu, who was justly esteemed the very genius of France.

Illustrious minister, all that I have said of this monarch speaks him but a man; and nobody is wise at all times: But the follies of princes are more conspicuous than those of meaner persons.

Paris, 15th of the 12th Moon, of the Year 1660.

XV.—*To MAHUMMED, in the Desert.*

MAY the angel of peace pitch his pavilion at the entrance of that blessed cave where thou residest! May thy soul feel calm and undisturbed joys, and for ever repose in divine tranquillity, whilst the rest of the world are molested with perpetual cares and fears, broils and enmities,

passions within, and furies without ; in a word, whilst they are always in danger of one another, of themselves, and of the elements which compound their nature.

O man, highly beloved of God, favourite of the angels, care of Heaven, and the singular darling of Providence ! the palm of an almighty hand is extended under thee when thou sittest down or walkest, always ready to snatch thee up from the calamities which threaten this lower world, and lift thee to paradise, where the assembly of the just wait for thy presence.

There has been an earthquake lately in these parts, which has put all France into a great consternation, astonished every body, and increased the thoughtfulness of the wise. The first effects of it were felt by the inhabitants of the Pyrenees, which are certain mountains dividing France and Spain. There it did great mischief, overwhelming some medicinal baths, many houses, and destroying hundreds of people. Only one mosque, or church, which sunk into the caverns below, was thrown up again, and stands very firm, but in another place. This is looked upon as a great miracle, especially by the French, who, for aught I know, may censure partially, favouring their own interest, in regard this church has been disputed between them and the Spaniards, each nation claiming right to it, as standing before exactly on the frontier line ; but now their quarrel is incontestibly decided, for it is removed by this convulsion of the globe near half a league from its former situation, which is so far within the acknowledged limits of France. This the French priests magnify as an apparent proof of the justice of their pretensions, and the people seem very willing to believe it.

As for me, I have another opinion of earthquakes, and am persuaded that they are as natural as the winds,

which no man knows how to draw into any party or faction; unless we believe the stories of the Lapland witches. I am persuaded that this globe is much more ancient than the generality of mankind imagine it to be, that it has undergone various changes by the predominance of fire and water, and that it is now hastening towards another revolution. I believe the central fire has eaten its way almost to the surface, and kindled all the mines of sulphur and other inflammable matter which it meets with in its circular ascent; these corroding, and daily consuming their own vaults, approaching also sometimes too near the vast receptacles of subterranean waters which lie nearer the surface, overheat those lakes, which being thus rarefied into vapours, and pent up in the hollow of the globe, strive to break forth with immense violence, which causes that heaving and rocking of the superficies that so terrifies mortals: But then the cause is very deep and far from us; for where the surface is shallow, in such passions of the globe, the earth commonly breaks and tumbles in, with whatsoever is upon it; nay, whole cities sometimes have been thus swallowed up. And the danger is easily foreknown, by a short snatching and trepidation of the ground, houses, trees, men, and every thing within its reach; for then the convulsion is generally fatal: But where the motion is heavy, grave, and regular, it is a sign that both the source and the danger of it are far off: And this is so much the more evident, by how much farther the earthquake is felt above ground; for the nearer any such passion happens to the centre, it must be granted that its force is extended the wider on the circumference. This depends on a mathematical demonstration, and there needs no more be said to thee who art consummate in the sciences.

- What I esteem a due reflection on this is, that though

there be no peril in these remote earthquakes, yet we know not how soon they will come nearer to us, neither can we be assured where or when they will happen, or how far they will reach. It follows, therefore, by a natural consequence, that since these things are unavoidable, and all the wit of man cannot invent a means to escape sinking into the bowels of the earth, where it breaks in, we ought to be careless and indifferent what death we die, and only be solicitous to live like men, that is, according to reason; for whether our souls survive or no, it will be comfortable to expire in peace, and full of our own innocence.

Paris, 5th of the 12th Moon, of the Year 1660.

B O O K II.

LETTER I.—*To the Venerable MUFTI.*

HERE is now like to be a great change at this court: Cardinal Mazarini is dead. He died at the Castle of the Wood of Vinciennes on the ninth of this moon, having been sick a long time. There happened a great fire at the Louvre, (so they call the king's palace in this city) about five weeks ago, which obliged the cardinal, who lodged there at that time, to remove to his own house; from whence, for the sake of the air, he was advised by his physicians to go to the aforesaid castle; but all in vain; for death, which finds access into the strongest fortresses, pursued him thither, and led him in triumph to the region of silence and forgetfulness, who made so great a noise and bustle in this our world.

It is reported that a certain astrologer foretold him he

should die in this moon : But the cardinal gave no credit to him, though one would think he had some reason to believe him in this, for the sake of a former prediction of his concerning the Duke of Beaufort. I have mentioned this prince, and the enmity that was between Mazarini and him, which occasioned the duke's imprisonment in the Castle of the Wood of Vincennes. During his restraint, the aforementioned astrologer gave it out in Paris, that the duke should escape out of prison precisely on such a day. The cardinal being informed of this, waited till the day came, designing to punish the astrologer as a cheat, or at least to expose him for an ignorant person : To which end he sent for him, and upbraiding him with presumption and folly, in that the day was now come, and yet the Duke of Beaufort was still a prisoner, without any hopes, or scarce a possibility of escaping, ordered him to be sent to the Bastile. But the astrologer, addressing himself with much submission and earnestness, spoke to this effect : " May it please your eminence only to respite my sentence till to-morrow, and then hang me, if you do not find that I have spoke truth. The day which I foretold is come indeed, but it is not past. A courier will soon convince you that I have not studied this science in vain." The cardinal, moved with these words, only confined the astrologer in a chamber of his own palace : And the next day he received an express which gave him an account of the duke's escape, and the manner of it, viz. that on the day before, he had let himself down by a ladder of ropes into the castle ditch, and was no more to be seen or heard of. Thus the astrologer escaped the cardinal's revenge, and got much fame at the court, which was increased by the cardinal's death falling out exactly according to his prediction.

This minister was a very subtle man ; and Cardinal

Richlieu used to say of him, "That if he were minded to put a trick on the devil, he would only set Mazarini to work." Therefore he made him his confident, instructed him in all secrets of the French court, the art of government, and on his deathbed recommended him to the king, as the fittest man to succeed him in the management of the public. He was after the death of Lewis XIII. at first opposed by several grandees, but the queen's authority, and that of the Prince of Conde, supported him; whence arose a common proverb in those days, "The queen permits all, the cardinal commands all, and the prince puts all in execution:" For this last had then the office of general.

This minister was not esteemed so covetous as his predecessor, yet he heaped up vast treasures, part of which he bestowed in magnificent buildings and furniture, the rest he sent into Italy to his father, who, astonished at the prodigious quantities of gold he received, used to say, "Sure it rains money in France!" However, he made himself odious to the subjects of this nation by his continual oppressions, and they are glad he is gone.

It is a byword at Rome, when any pope dies, to say, "Now the dog is dead, all his malice is buried with him:" But I doubt it will not prove true in the court of France at this juncture; for the king will either find a minister equal in subtilty to the deceased cardinal, who shall supply his place, or he will take the administration of affairs into his own hands. Be it which way it will, we are like to see the same maxims pursued, so long as Cardinal Richlieu's memoirs are in being, who first taught this crown to understand its own strength.

Paris, 14th of the 3d Moon, of the Year 1661.

II.—*To the VISIER AZEM, at the Porte.*

I HAVE sent a dispatch to the mufti, acquainting him with the death of Cardinal Mazarini, first minister of state, and the greatest favourite that ever lived. Now I will inform thee of some passages which I omitted in my letter to that venerable prelate. It is necessary for me thus to distribute my intelligence, with a due respect to the different quality of my superiors.

Thou, I suppose, wilt require some account of his disposition and morals, with such a character as may render this great genius familiar to thy knowledge.

He seemed to place his chief happiness in aggrandising his master, whom he served with a zeal so pure and disinterested, a loyalty so uncorruptible, and by such regular methods of prudence and policy, as if in his days nothing were to be counted virtue or vice, but what either favoured or opposed the King of France's interest. He was of a happy constitution for a courtier, being by nature debonair, complaisant, affable, and of a sweet deportment; yet experience and art taught him to improve these advantages to the height of dissimulation. You should see courtesy and extraordinary goodness flowing into every feature of his face; you should hear words breathing from his mouth, like the soft benedictions of an angel; yet at the same time his heart gave the lie to both. He meant nothing less than that a man should find him as good as his word: He was ever ready to promise any thing that was demanded of him, but in performance slow, and full of excuses; frugal of his prince's money, and liberal of his own; magnificent in his buildings, and the furniture belonging to them; aiming in all things to exceed other men his equals, and in some to surpass even mighty princes his superiors. In

a word, he was accomplished with all qualifications requisite in a fortunate courtier and a good statesman.

Yet after all, this sublime genius yielded to death, but not like common mortals: He died altogether like himself, without so much as changing that settled gravity and serene air of his face, as had been remarkable during his life. He made the king heir of his estate, and bequeathed abundance of legacies.

To say all in brief; if he was great in his life, he was much more so in his death, mingling his last breath with the sighs and tears of the king, who lamented his departure with the mourning of a son for a father.

Paris, 26th of the 3d Moon, of the Year 1661.

III.—*To PESTELI HALI, his Brother, Master of the Customs at Constantinople.*

YESTERDAY a dispatch came to my hand from a very remote part of the earth: Our cousin Isouf sent it from Astracan, a famous city for traffic, formerly belonging to the Crim Tartars, but now in the possession of the Muscovites. He has been there a considerable time, finding profit by merchandize; for there is a vast resort to that city from China, Indostan, Persia, Muscovy, and other provinces of Europe and Asia. The roads to it are daily covered with the caravans of trading people; and the river Volga can hardly sustain the innumerable multitude of vessels that transport passengers with their goods backwards and forwards between Astracan and the regions round about the Caspian Sea, into which that mighty river discharges itself.

Isouf is ingenious, and has pitched upon some advantageous way of enriching himself, which tempts him to

take up his abode in that city, and there end his travels, or at least he will repose himself there till fortune presents him with a fairer opportunity of increasing his wealth.

In the mean time, I perceive by his letter that he gets money apace, lives very happily, and has the wit to keep himself free from the yoke of marriage, which embarrassed him so much formerly. He soon put that troublesome wife out of his mind, after he had divorced her; and he never failed to gratify himself with new amours wherever he came in his travels. He writes very comically, and I cannot forbear smiling, when he tells me he has had as many concubines as the Grand Signior, by which thou wilt perceive that Isouf is much addicted to gallantry. He frankly confesses, that he first learned this mode of loving at large in Persia, especially at Is-pahan, where he says it is a mark of honour for a man to be good at intriguing with the ladies; and he is called a Turk, by way of disgrace, who frequents not every evening the gardens and houses of pleasure in the suburbs. But he adds, that in India the liberty of courting women is much greater, and that the very nature of that climate disposes a man to this soft passion. In a word, our amorous kinsman retains the same humour still.

Yet this does not hinder him from prosecuting his necessary affairs with diligence and alacrity. He dispatched a business for me at Archangel in Russia, and another at Moscow, very dexterously, which convinces me that he is not less sedulous and careful in things which concern himself. He says the Muscovites are the greatest drunkards in the world; their chief and most beloved liquor is what the French call the Water of Life. It is a chemical drink, extracted from the lees of wine or other strong

beverages, such as thou knowest is common among the Greeks, Armenians, and Franks in the Levant. When the Muscovites are once got into a house where this nectar is sold, and are a little warmed and elevated with it, they will not depart till all their money is gone; nay, they will pawn their very garments from their backs in a frolic, rather than want their dose of this inebriating stuff, and go out stark naked in the coldest weather, that is, fall asleep in the open streets, and yet are never the worse for it when they awake, but go to their daily work with the greater ardour; for it is only the common people are guilty of this extravagance: As for the gentry and nobility, they are more close and reserved in their drunken debauches.

The Muscovites, according to the character he gives me of them, are a very rude and unpolished people, surly to one another, and extremely rugged to strangers: They despise all other nations in the world, and say it is impossible for any man to go to heaven who has not a Muscovite soul in him. They profess the Christian religion, and were formerly of the Greek church; but now they have separated themselves, and set up a patriarch of their own, to whom so great a veneration is paid, that the emperor himself holds his stirrup when he mounts on horseback.

Bröther, I desire thee to speak advantageously of Isouf to the illustrious Kerker Haffan, and to the other bassas of the bench. He will be a serviceable man to the Grand Signior, if encouraged by some place of honour and profit. I wish I could say the same of our cousin Solyman; but he is too wise in his own conceit.

Dear Pesteli, excuse my abruptness; for my hours are divided between the service I owe to the sultan and the affection I bear my friends.

Paris, 7th of the 5th Moon, of the Year 1661.

IV.—*To ORCHAN CABET, Student in the Sciences, and Pensioner to the Sultan.*

I HAVE heard of thy fame, and the manner of thy conversion to the law brought down from heaven ; how that from a Christian priest thou art become a Mussulman abdalla, that is, a believer and servant of the True God. May thy reward, both here and hereafter, be according to thy integrity in this change of faith and religion ; for hypocrites are neither acceptable to God nor man ; yet most men are proselyted for interest, fear, or other human regards ; and in the sense of the Christians, thou knowest a renegado and a villain are reciprocal terms.

The insupportable miseries of servitude tempt many to embrace circumcision, which at once sets them free, and often puts them in a condition to mend their fortunes, and live more happily than they did even before they were captives ; whilst ambition and avarice are prevailing motives with others in more prosperous circumstances to be of the Grand Signior's religion, that so they may rise in his favour, and obtain some considerable preferment at the court, or office in the army, like the ancient Melchites among the Christians, who were so called because they always professed the faith of the Grecian emperors, without examining whether it was orthodox or no ; a sort of religious parasites, who would be any thing to serve their own interest, and adore the devil himself, provided their sovereign showed them an example.

Yet after all there are some who change their religion in pure sincerity, only compelled thereto by the dint of exalted reason and motives of virtue ; Such as these are thinking men, persons of bold spirits, who dare call in question the traditions of their fathers, examine the prin-

ciples in which they were educated, dispute every thing, and bring all to the standard of natural truth.

I rejoice to hear that thou art one of this character, and not in the number of counterfeiters or bigots; for such bring no credit to the religion they embrace, but rather a scandal. Yet the arms of the munificent Porte are open to receive all who profess that God is One, and that Mahomet is his apostle, leaving the scrutiny of their intention to him who searches the heart.

Thy learning gives thee fair opportunities of doing good; put it to a right use; convince the infidels, whom thou hast forsaken of their errors; confirm the true believers in the faith without blemish.

Do this by discourse, by writing, and by thine own exemplary life, which last will prevail above ten thousand eloquent sermons.

In a word, show thyself a true and faithful follower of the prophet on earth, and God will translate thee to his company in paradise, where Moses will introduce thee, Jesus will entertain thee with joy, and all the one hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets will welcome thee to the pleasures which know no end.

Paris, 21st of the 5th Moon, of the Year 1661.

V.—*To the MUFTI.*

WE are apt to admire some strange passages which we find recorded in ancient history, and whose truth is out of the reach of any mortal to prove; yet we slight the miracles which are before our eyes, evident matters of fact, which nobody can contradict. Whence this should proceed I know not, unless it be from a natural kind of drowsiness in the soul common to the greatest part of

men, like the sleep of those who cannot so soon be awakened by the loudest noises they are accustomed to, as by the soft and still ideas of a strange dream : So we regard not the things to which we are daily habituated, though in themselves never so prodigious, whilst we startle and are amazed at the most ordinary relations of antiquity, only because they are novel to us, and we were not eye-witnesses of the things themselves.

I formerly sent a letter to Cara Hali, the sultan's physician, wherein I mentioned several physicians of Arabia, who, in past ages, were eminent for some remarkable cures ; but I tell thee, not one of them could match the King of France's success in curing an epidemical distemper, which they call the King's Evil. The general symptoms of this malady, are certain swellings in the face, neck, or other parts of the body, sometimes accompanied with blindness, deafness, lameness, and other imperfections. Those who are troubled with this disease flock to the king's court at certain seasons of the year, and being introduced into his presence, he only touches the part affected with his hand, and an infallible cure follows.

They say this gift has been inherent in the kings of France for many generations, and the priests magnify it as a great miracle. But I tell thee, all the prodigy, in my opinion, lies in the strength of the people's imagination, which thou knowest works half the cure in many distempers. The priests stand by the king, whilst he touches the sick ; they repeat their gospel, and use certain prayers and exorcisms, being vested all in white like magicians. These ceremonies are performed with abundance of gravity, which strikes an awe into the credulous patients ; and to render the business yet more mysterious, whereas other physicians take money of the

sick, this royal *Æsculapius* bestows a piece of gold on every one whom he touches, which they are obliged to wear about their necks as long as they live. Now, whether the charm lies in the gold, or the king's touch, or the prayers and ceremonies of the priests, or, finally, in the patient's fancy, it matters not much: This is certain, that thousands who come to the king's feet very much disordered by this evil, find a sensible alteration in their bodies before they depart from his presence, and in a few hours, or days at most, are perfectly recovered.

Perhaps the kings of France have some magical or physical tincture in their blood, or it may be they have found out the philosopher's stone so much talked of, and delivered it down to their posterity, as a part of the royal inheritance, which enables the present king to do so many prodigious things both at home and abroad, in peace and in war, besides his part in curing this sickness. I am no Rosicrucian, nor very fond or credulous of miracles, yet I often wonder at the treasures of this monarch, which appear inexhaustible. But the ways of kings are secret, and he of France is singular in his mysterious methods of growing rich and great: Neither do all his magnificent expences seem to diminish his wealth. The King of Sweden has been his pensioner ever since he began to reign, and millions of French gold are dispersed among the German princes.

These things cause his subjects to descant variously; but I refer them to thy oraculous judgment, whose single testa is of ten thousand times more worth than the decrees of a French parliament.

Paris, 3d of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1661.

VI.—*To MIRMADOLIN, Santone of the Vale of Sidon.*

Now I will vent holy things, and what the Divinity shall inspire. The world was in weeds when Hofain the prophet was slain, and the moon put on her mourning drefs: The timbrels of Persia, Arabia, and Babylon, were heard in the dead of the night; their sound reached to the third heaven; the shepherds ran to the heights of the earth, to discover the occasion of so much noise; the centinels of forts and castles gave the alarm, and the men of war took hold of the sword, the bow, and the spear; the Tygris overflowed its banks, and Diarbekir became a lake; a dark body of clouds overcast the sky, and poured forth thunder, lightning, and hail; fire ran along on the sands of the desert, and the air was all in a flame; horror possessed the minds of mortals, and the angels themselves were uneasy; the beasts of the field ran into dens and caves, and the dragons were touched with remorse; only the more venomous Kyfilbaschi swelled with pride; the poison of murder and heresy had puffed up their souls; they and their posterity are accursed to this day, and to the hour of the irrevocable sentence.

O Santone, great is thy faith, in that thou hast abandoned the shadow of this world, and separated thyself from the contagion of mortals! I revere the majesty of thy sublime soul, the intellect ranging at liberty. Thou daily gatherest flowers from the garden of Eden, and being in the body, enjoyest the sweets of paradise. Kings would lay down their crowns to taste of thy pleasures, did they but know them, and exchange all the glory of empires for one moment of thy unspeakable bliss; thou companion and care of angels, darling of the Monarch Omnipotent!

Wherever thou liest down, whether by day or by night, the watchers above stand ready with umbrellas to screen thee from the scorching beams of the sun, the chilling darts of the moon and stars, and from all injuries of weather; the elements go out of their courses to serve thee, and all nature espouses thy interest.

The merchant hires a thousand camels, and loads them with the choicest riches of the Levant: He endures all the fatigues of a long and dangerous travel through Syria, Arabia, and Persia; runs the risk of robbers, diseases, and ten thousand methods of death; and after all his hazards and pains, is not half so happy nor so rich as thou, who aboundest in every thing, because thou desirest nothing which thou hast not, or that is unnecessary. The ploughmen labour for thee in the field, and so do the artificers in the city; the noble and the vulgar are thy purveyors, and the greatest sovereigns pay tribute to thee; every house is thy home, and they count themselves happy under whose roof thou vouchsafest to sleep; they are really so, for benediction accompanies the perfect man in all his ways, and the favours of Heaven overtake them that show kindness to him: Thou art lord of other men's estates, and every man's field is thy inheritance; thou enjoyest the riches of this world, without being tainted with the vices that attend them, and receivest immortal assurances and seals of the future glory in the life which is to come. O happy estate of the righteous! O life to be truly envied!

As for me, I am like a galley-slave, chained down to the oar, and forced to row incessantly whither the master of the vessel commands. So am I obliged to obey the dictates of my superiors, whether there be sin in the case or no. I am fastened in the cares of this vain world,

and the more particular anxieties of state, from all which thou art happily free.

Oh that it were lawful for me to shake off the fretting yoke, and disentangle myself from the snares of human policy ! that I might live like the men of the first ages, who honoured the earth as their common mother, and made no envious inclosures : They sported innocently on her fragrant bosom, and never molested their kind parent by cruelty to any of her offspring ; they sucked the milk of her breasts ; her veins streamed with wine and honey ; they banqueted on variety of excellent fruits ; and nobody thought of killing and eating his fellow-animal : The birds could then range the air without fear of the fowler ; neither did any yawling huntsman rouse the timorous hare from her seat : The roes and the hinds could scamper at pleasure over the plain without being hattered to the mountains and rocks for sanctuary ; neither did any sly angler trepan the fish of the rivers : As for the sea, it was then unknown ; no man as yet had ventured on that perfidious element, or found out the use of ships : There was in those days no foreign commerce or traffic, nor any need of it ; every region supplied its inhabitants with what was useful and necessary, and those temperate mortals desired no more ; they lived without irregular appetites, free from ambition, fraud, and blood.

This is the life so much desired by me, and which thou actually enjoyest. God augment thy felicities and raptures, that thou mayest pass from one vision and ecstacy to another, till Gabriel snatch thy soul away in a divine transport beyond the possibility of a relapse.

Holy Santone, whilst thou art on earth pray for me ; and when thou art among the immortals, do me some favour which may last for ever.

Paris, 26th of the 8th Moon, of the year 1661.

VII.—To DIGNET OGLOU.

My business in this place obliges me to keep company with all sorts of people: Hence I indifferently associate myself with statesmen, soldiers, courtiers, priests, fiddlers, mechanics, seamen, or persons of any profession, from whom I can hope for any improvement; for there is hardly so despicable a fellow in the world who may not teach an inquisitive mind something to which it was a stranger before.

Sometimes I converse with painters, whom I generally find to be men of wit and sense, but very lewd and dissolute: However, they serve to divert my melancholy, to which thou knowest I am much inclined; for they are the merriest sparks in the world, abounding with smart repartees, jests, and comical stories, besides an hundred mimical tricks of good buffoonery to make one laugh, that it is almost impossible to be sad in their company.

They are most of them bred in the academy, or in colleges and schools where the sciences are professed; it being in a manner necessary that men of this trade should have a smack of all sorts of learning, and especially that they should be indifferent good historians, they being many times desired to represent pieces of antique and modern history without a pattern. They have a very facetious way also of telling a story to the life, as well as of drawing it so in picture. They would dissolve the most stiff and morose hadgi into laughter and jollity, to hear how gracefully they will ridicule the most serious matters, and turn every thing into burlesque; for they are admirable satirists by nature.

Yet these are not all alike, but differ in their tempers like other men: Some of them are proud and stately, others fawning and abject, and all of them great humourists.

It was an odd whim of Martin Heemskirk, a famous painter that was born at a village of the same name: He died in the year of the Christians hegira 1554. This man had amassed together in his lifetime a vast quantity of money, and having no wife or children, nor other relations of his own to leave it to, he was resolved to do something for which he might be talked of after his death. I have heard of many dying men that have had one caprice or other in making their last will and testament, but thou wilt say this of Martin's was singular; for on his deathbed he bequeathed all his wealth to be distributed into equal dowries, or portions, wherewith to marry a certain number of maids of Heemskirk, his birth-place, yearly, on this condition, that the new married couple, with all the wedding guests, should dance on his grave.

It is necessary for thee to know, that since his death there has been a great alteration of religion in those parts: The inhabitants, which in his time were Roman catholics, are now all protestants; and at the time of this change or reformation, as they call it, it was the general practice of the protestants to demolish all images and crosses wherever they found them. Now, it was the custom of the Roman catholics to set up a cross at the end of every sepulchre of the dead; yet so great a veneration have the Heemskirkers for the memory of this painter, that whereas there is not a cross to be seen standing in all the country besides, yet his, being of brass, remains untouched, as the only title their daughters can show to his legacy.

It was a more cruel and inhuman practice of an Italian painter, (I think his name was Giotto) who designing to draw a crucifix to the life, wheedled a poor man to suffer himself to be bound to a cross for an hour, at the end of which he should be released again, and receive a consi-

derable gratuity for his pains; but, instead of this, as soon as he had him fast on the cross, he stabbed him dead, and then fell to drawing. He was esteemed the greatest master in all Italy at that time; and having this advantage of a dead man hanging on a cross before him, there is no question but he made a matchless piece of work of it.

As soon as he had finished his picture, he carried it to the pope, who was astonished, as at a prodigy of art, highly extolling the exquisiteness of the features and limbs, the languishing pale deadness of the face, the unaffected sinking of the head; in a word, he had drawn to the life not only that privation of sense and motion which we call death, but also the very want of the least vital symptom.

This is better understood than expressed: Every body knows that it is a masterpiece to represent a passion or a thought well and naturally; much greater is it to describe the total absence of these interior faculties, so as to distinguish the figure of a dead man from one that is only asleep.

Yet all this and much more could the pope discern in the admirable draught which Giotto presented him; and he liked it so well that he resolved to place it over the altar of his own chapel; for thou knowest this is the practice of the Nazarenes to adore pictures and images. Giotto told him, since he liked the copy so well, he would show him the original if he pleased.

“What dost thou mean by the original? (said the Pope) Wilt thou show me Jesus Christ on the cross in his own person?” “No, (replied Giotto) but I will show your Holiness the original from whence I drew this, if you will absolve me from all punishment.”

The good old father, suspecting something extraordi-

nary by the painter's thus capitulating with him, promised on his word to pardon him, which Giotto believing, immediately told him where it was ; and attending him to the place, as soon as they were entered, he drew a curtain back, which hung before the dead man on the cross, and told the pope what he had done.

The holy father, extremely troubled at so inhuman and barbarous an action, repealed his promise, and told the painter he should surely be put to an exemplary death.

Giotto, seeming resigned to the sentence pronounced upon him, only begged leave to finish the picture before he died, which was granted him. In the mean while, a guard was set upon him to prevent his escape. As soon as the pope had caused the picture to be delivered into his hands, he takes a brush, and dipping it in a sort of stuff he had ready for that purpose, daubs the picture all over with it, so that nothing could now be seen of the erucifix, but it was quite effaced in all outward appearance.

This made the pope stark mad : He stamped, foamed, and raved like one in a phrenzy ; he swore the painter should suffer the most cruel death that could be invented, unless he drew another full as good as the former, for if but the least grace was missing, he would not pardon him ; but if he could produce an exact parallel, he would not only give him his life, but an ample reward in money.

The painter, as he had reason, desired this under the pope's signet, that he might not be in danger of a second repeal, which was granted him ; and then he took a wet sponge, and wiped off all the varnish he had daubed on the picture, and the crucifix appeared the same in all respects as it was before.

The pope, who looked on this as a great secret, being ignorant of the arts which painters use, was ravished at the strange metamorphosis; and, to reward the painter's treble ingenuity, he absolved him from all his sins, and the punishments due to them, ordering moreover his steward to cover the picture all over with gold, as a farther gratuity for the painter; and they say this crucifix is the original by which the most famous crucifixes in Europe are drawn.

I need make no other reflection on this, than, that as the supposed murder of Jesus the son of Mary is the source of all the Christians devotion, so the real homicide which this painter committed has made it more intense and fervent, by how much the crucifixes drawn after this pattern excel all that were seen before them in the tragical portraiture of the martyred Messias.

And from this reason it is that painters are in so great esteem among the Italians, because they form the gods which those infidels adore. It is no wonder, therefore, that the chief head of their church should so easily absolve murder in a painter as a venial sin, especially when it is done in ordine ad Deum, as the Jesuits say, that is, to promote God's glory, as the pope easily persuaded himself this was; since idolatry is the main engine which supports the state and grandeur of the Roman court. And all the world knows that holy city is a type of heaven, or at least the crafty priests would fain represent it so.

My friend, thou and I have seen enough of their tricks and holy frauds in Sicily. Praise be to God they had not power to pervert us: Our faith remains inviolate; we still possess the integrity of mussulmans, the native attach we owe to the prophet, who was sent to exterminate idols. In a word, we adore none but one God,

creator of the worlds. May that incomprehensible for ever keep us in the same faith and practice, till the release of our souls.

Paris, 13th of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1661.

VIII.—*To LUBANO ABUFEI SAAD, an Egyptian Knight.*

THIS court is now at Fontainbleau, and all seems to be dissolved in joy for the birth of a dauphin. The queen was delivered of this young prince on the first day of this moon: There is nothing but feasting, dancing, and revelling on this account, with bonfires, and congratulatory addresses: Only the Duke of Orleans, the king's brother, has little reason to be over merry, since he was the next presumptive heir of the crown, in case the king died without issue male, for the laws of France exclude a female from reigning. Yet this Duke dissembles his inward grief, for being thus put by his hopes, and appears as joyful as the father himself. He hugs and admires the royal babe, wishing him health and long life in a compliment, whom he really could rather wish out of the world, or at least that he had never come into it; so violent are the temptations of a crown, so strong the desire of empire, that the nearness of relation, which endears the rest of mortals one to another, estranges the hearts of princes from those of their own blood, if they stand in the way of their ambition. And I can assure thee, the French do not spare to say the Duke of Orleans has enough of this vice to attempt great things, were not his genius overawed by the matchless fortune and spirit of his brother.

Neither is the king himself insensible of this, remembering with what warmth the duke received the flattering

addresses of some courtiers, during his brother's dangerous sickness, when the physicians had well nigh given him over for a dead man.

I was acquainted with this passage but lately by Orsin the dwarf, who watches all the motions of this court. He tells me, that the king being informed a rumour was whispered among the grandees of his death, caused them all to be sent for, and to pass through his chamber, whilst the curtains of his bed were drawn open, that they might see their sovereign alive, though in a bad state of health. He says moreover, that the true reason why several lords of late have been removed from their offices about the king, is, because he resented ill the too early and passionate court they made to the Duke of Orleans, on the report of his brother's death. It is natural to all men to love themselves, and to desire the disposal of their own affairs. No man would be content to have his estate given away by his servants at their own discretion; and sovereign monarchs are the most jealous of all men in such cases, particularly the King of France is known to be a prince very sensible of his honour, and soon touched in that point, by the least appearance of disrespect in his subjects, and of encroachment in his neighbours.

As for the Duke of Orleans, he is a prince of no great character, either as a soldier or a statesman; neither has he been much talked of in the world, till the beginning of this year, when he married an English princess, by name Henrietta, daughter to the late murdered king of that nation.

We have had another match here also between the late Duke of Orleans's daughter and the Prince of Tuscany. These things occasion various discourse among those who who pretend to weigh exactly the different in-

terests of Christian courts, especially of such as are concerned in the new alliances; for the greatest monarchs here in the West marry only for profit and advantage, to fortify themselves by a closer union with the house to which they are allied; whereas our eastern princes only indulge their passions in the choice of their wives, admitting none to their embraces but the most exquisite beauties that can be found; and where they once pitch their fancy, they neither regard riches, honour, or any other recommendation, save what their love suggests, being themselves inexhaustible fountains of wealth, nobility, and good fortune, to all who have the happiness to be in their favour.

They scorn to sell themselves, and prostitute the glory of their diadem to a foreign prince, for the sake of a little gold, and much more trouble, with a proud female whom perhaps they never saw: Yet this is the common practice among the princes of the Nazarene belief, who consider not, that instead of a wife, a partner of their empire, and a friend, they often entertain a snake, a traitor, an enemy; especially if she be a woman of wit and intrigue, as most of them are. This made the now queen-mother, the relict of Lewis XIII. suspected by her husband, and the present Queen of France is under the like circumstances; and it will always be so where princes match themselves after this manner, and cannot debar their wives from holding a secret correspondence with the family from which they descend.

Assuredly the Ottoman politics are the most refined and secure of any in the world, our religion most holy, and our morals most sound; which three are evident signs that God has raised up this sacred empire to subdue all the nations on earth, and bring them to the faith of his divine unity.

Paris, 9th of the 11th Moon, of the Year 1661.

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IX.—To CARA HALI, *Physician to the Grand Signior.*

I AM now in my chamber, by a glowing fire, wanting nothing that can comfort a reasonable man; whilst I hear the winds whistling, the snow driving upon my windows, and the hollow voices of the watch proclaiming a night little less cold than that lasting one they feel in the arctic circle once a-year. Yet I wish myself in a plain, or on the top of some high mountain, where I might feel Nature in the most rigid of all her humours. I love variety, and it is a pain to be confined to pleasure itself, when it is all of one kind, or what I am used to.

It is to thee, my dear Hali, I owe this thought, when you told me once, as we were walking together in the cemetery of Sultan Solyman's mosque, "That man is made for all things."

I remember the elegance and force of reason with which you explained your sentiments, upon a loss which I had then sustained by shipwreck, comforting me with this reflection, that all the gains on earth are only burdens; all the riches, honours, pleasures, and whatsoever is desired by mortals, are but so many clogs to tie us faster to this little narrow globe, which we are born to trample on as our footstool.

All this is true; but I consider farther, that the occurrences of this life ought to be received with indifference, and we should be as cheerful in a prison as in a palace, because nothing can happen to us which was not decreed by fate. Methinks I could go as freely to torments in a just cause, as to a sumptuous banquet; I could smile at the malice of my persecutors, and triumph over the vain executioners, when I see them sweat at their inhuman toil, and yet can never have their wills of a soul cast in such a mould as mine, whatever they may

do with my body; though they exccruciate me with a thousand inventions of cruelty, though they reduce me to ashes, yet they cannot rob me of my reason; neither fire, nor sword, nor rack, nor any other instrument of barbarous rage, can hurt my thoughts; I shall still have the power of meditating, in spite of them all, and I esteem that the specific happiness of a rational creature. There is no such thing as pleasure or pain, but what our opinion makes so: I have tried to handle fire; I have grasped hot burning coals in the palm of my hand, with which I now write; the devouring element soon fastened on my skin, and eat its way through into my flesh, whilst I was busy in contemplating its nature and effects, without being concerned in any sense of pain; I kept a tight rein, and curbed my soul; I held it within compass, and would not suffer it to winch, or lash, or flounce out of itself, or descend into my body, to rescue the part affected, or be concerned at its grievances; but, when I reflected on the inconveniences that might follow, and that it would hinder me from serving the Grand Signior and my friends, I threw the coals away, well satisfied that I had made the experiment without prejudicing my reason, or falling into any passion unbecoming a man.

I take as much pleasure in fasting as in eating or drinking, in labour as in rest, in watching as in sleep; there is no excess or contrariety in nature, which does not afford me as much delight as mediocrity, or the golden mean itself; I find gust in every thing that happens to me, and this I take to be the proper part of a manly man, or of one resigned to God.

Yet this hinders me not from bustling in the world, and prosecuting my business with alacrity and some eagerness. We are born for action, and not wholly for thought; it is a mixed life we are to lead on earth; but

when I fail of my end or desired success in any undertaking, I am not troubled, considering I was born to encounter evil as well as good in this mortal state.

In all that I have said, I do not pretend to the celebrated apathy of the stoics; I feel pleasure and pain from the same objects which thus affect other men, but I feel them with indifference, not suffering my understanding and judgment to participate with my passion and sense.

I have perceived myself sometimes in agonies, which I thought exactly answered the character of those which dying persons feel, and I believe they were in a degree the very same; yet I found no panic fears upon me, no dread of that amazing change, but rather certain blooming hopes, young, tender, springing joys, arising from the thoughts of a new life, the unavoidable effect of that which we call death, wherein I promised myself the pleasure of fresh enjoyments and diversions, to which I was wholly then a stranger.

If thou thinkest this too extravagant, and that death is not a proper object of our wishes, yet thou wilt at least acknowledge that it may furnish us with sufficient arguments of content and acquiescence, since no man can avoid it; and it is sure to entertain us with novelties, which we never were acquainted with before, which recommends it under a very desirable figure, because human nature perpetually covets new things.

I have seen persons condemned to death here in Paris, who have been offered life on certain conditions not agreeing with their humour; yet have refused it, and rather chose death, which they knew would free them at once from all their present troubles. And thou knowest with what resignation our greatest bassas submit their necks to the executioners, when the Grand Signior thinks

fit to call for their lives. All that they reply to the fatal mandate is, "The will of my sovereign lord be done." They at once gather up all the strength of their scattered reason, and shrink their dilated souls to a point; then with a redoubled force, they shake off their inclinations to honours, riches, and the pleasures of this life, as a man rouses from a long dream or trance; with smiles, and a profound submission they kiss the royal firme, being awakened to the thoughts of more illustrious and serene joys than this gross earth affords, even to the ineffable pleasures of Eden, the sure reward of those that die in obedience and peace; since they are to be esteemed martyrs, as well as those who meet death in the field of the sacred combat, in the war for our holy faith.

Oh! that it were my lot thus to expire in honour, to have my last breath mixed with the devout aspirations and suffrages of true believers, that so my example might edify others, and the public character of an untainted loyalty might benefit myself; whilst some proclaimed it before my arrival at the invisible regions, to prepare the ghosts of just men to bid me welcome, and give me a kind reception, who am yet wholly a stranger in those parts of the world; for death itself cannot banish me out of the universe, and there is my last comfort.

Thou, my dear physician, wilt conclude I am melancholy by this kind of discourse; but I tell thee it is only another way of expressing the secret pleasure and tranquillity of my soul, which is more to be valued by him that enjoys it, than all the laughter and extravagant mirth in the world: These only ruffle our passions, and raise a dust in our eyes; whereas the other compose and purify our reason, giving us a constant prospect of things past, present, and to come; so that we can never be at a

lose, but always ready equipped for the worst contingencies. *Hali, adieu.*

Paris, 15th of the 12th Moon, of the Year 1661.

X.—*To the same.*

THE court of France in all things endeavours to imitate the ancient grandeur of the Roman emperors and their policy: As they had their amphitheatres, whereon were exhibited all sorts of shows and spectacles to divert the people in time of peace, so have these their theatres, whereon, according to the more acceptable mode of the present age, are represented the various kinds of virtue and vice, men's follies and perfections, modern humours and the ancient morality, intrigues of love and of state, surprising actions of war, and the subtle overtures of peace, the tyranny of sovereigns and rebellion of subjects; in fine, whatsoever is treated of in books, is here acted to the life on the stage, and with so much advantage of scenes, interludes, music, dances, language, wit, humour, and the like charming circumstances, that a man at some hours cannot better pass away his time than in being present at these entertainments, where all that he has read, either in ancient or modern history, deserving remark, shall be successively presented to his view, as efficaciously as if the persons were now living and in presence, whose actions each play describes.

There you shall be introduced, as it were, into the court and camp of the grand Cyrus; you shall accompany Alexander the Great in his expeditions through Asia; you shall see him die of poison at Babylon, and the Macedonian empire cantoned among his officers; you shall behold all the Roman Cæsars in their rise and

fall, with whatsoever particularities were observable in this or any other renowned monarchy on earth, not excluding the last and most universal empire of the Ottomans; for these infidels presume to act over again the part of Tamerlane, and lead about in dramatic triumph the engaged, yet still invincible Bajazet: In habits which only become the destined conquerors of the world, these slaves dare persecute the glorious Solyman, Mahomet the Great, the victorious Selim, and even Amurat himself, the stoutest emperor that ever reigned, I mean the uncle of our present sovereign.

Besides true history thus represented, the spectators are sometimes diverted with fabulous entries of gods, nymphs, fawns, satyrs, muses, graces, monsters, and whatsoever we find in the ancient poets.

These you shall see Prometheus fetching fire from heaven, to give life to his man of clay; Lycaon transformed into a wolf, for his unhespitable carriage to Jupiter; Ganymede snatched up into heaven by an eagle, and made Jupiter's cup-bearer, for his singular beauty. It is pleasant also to see Phrixus, with his sister Helle, swimming over the Hellespont on the back of a ram, with a golden fleece, whilst she for fear falls off, and is drowned; and from her name (Helle) that sea is supposed to be so called: In the mean while, Phrixus swims forward, and arrives at Colchis, where he sacrifices the ram, and hangs the golden fleece up in the temple, which was afterwards stole away by Jason and his Argonauts. It is equally diverting to see the artifice of the scenes and machines, which represent Jupiter transforming himself into a shower of gold, and so descending into Danae's lap, when he begets Perseus on her, who subdued the Gorgons, and with Medusa's head turned the Cephene nobles into statues: In a word, all the ingenious fictions of Orpheus,

Homer, Hesiod, Ovid, and the rest of the Greek and Roman poets, are here translated, not so much from one language to another, as from words to actions, and from dead inanimate characters to living figures of the things themselves; for these sort of plays are acted by men, women, and children, culled out and educated for that purpose; and the managers are at a vast charge for variety of proper scenes and dresses for every occasion, each actor being exactly apparelled according to the different quality of persons represented, and the mode of the age and country wherein they lived.

These sorts of diversions are very agreeable both to the court and city: The king takes great delight in them, especially in ballets and pastorals, which consist chiefly of good songs and dances, mixed with bold and uncouth entries of antiques, representing monsters and devils, as the Christians usually describe them.

But there was lately a check given to their sport, by an accident which has surpris'd all people that heard of it, and has puzzled the most intelligent heads to give an account of so strange an occurrence.

On the 19th of this moon, the king and the whole court were present at a ballet, representing the grandeur of the French monarchy: About the middle of the entertainment, there was an antique dance, performed by twelve masqueraders, in the supposed forms of demons; but before they had advanced far in their dance, they found an interloper amongst them, who, by increasing the number to thirteen, put them quite out of their measures; for they practise every step and motion beforehand till they are perfect: Being abashed, therefore, at the unavoidable blunders the thirteenth antique made them commit, they stood still like fools, gazing at one another, none daring to unmask or speak a word, for that

would have put all the spectators into a disorder and confusion. Cardinal Mazarini (who was the chief contri-eyer of these entertainments, to divert the king from more serious thoughts) stood close by the young monarch, with a scheme of the ballet in his hand; knowing, therefore, that this dance was to consist but of twelve antiques, and taking notice that there were actually thirteen, at first imputed it to some mistake; but afterwards, when he perceived the confusion of the dancers, and that they could not proceed, he made a more narrow inquiry into the cause of this disorder: To be brief, they convinced the cardinal that it could be no error of theirs, by a kind of demonstration, in that they had but twelve antique dresses of that sort, which were made on purpose for this particular ballet, whereas the thirteenth dancer was disguised after the same manner; therefore they concluded that either the devil, or somebody else, had put a trick on them. That which made it seem the greater mystery was, that when they came behind the scenes to uncase, and examine the matter, they found but twelve antiques, whereas on the stage there were thirteen.

The preciser sort of bigots gave it out for certain that the devil was amongst them, whilst others more probably say it was only some envious or ambitious dancing-master, who was either resolved to be revenged for not being one of the twelve, or designed to show his parts *incognito* against another opportunity, and in the interim set the court a-wondering at his singular skill and dexterity; for it was observed that one of the thirteen far surpassed all the rest, and did things to a miracle.

Be it how it will, it has brought to memory a passage that happened on the like occasion, at a town not far from Paris, about eighteen years ago; yet it was not half so much talked of then as it is now, which was the

reason I took no notice of it in any of my letters: But now they are big with it; it is the general discourse of all companies, who make comparison of that event with this: Perhaps it will not be unpleasant to thee to know it:

In the year 1644, toward the latter end, a company of stage-players were at a place called Vitry, entertaining the people with comedies; but there happened something really tragical to one of the actors. This man was to perform the part of one dead, and then he was to revive again by magic. He acted his part too truly, and baffled the necromancer's art; for when he touched him with his talisman, as the rules of the play required, in order to his resurrection, the inanimate trunk could not obey. The man was dead indeed.

Whether he overstrained himself in imitating the silent, still, and irrecoverable privations of that passive state, and gave his slippery soul a strong temptation, with a fair opportunity to escape its bonds, or whether Heaven had a particular hand in so remarkable a catastrophe, I will not presume to divine; but this and the other occurrence has put the people quite out of conceit with plays.

Sage Hali, remember the Arabian proverb, which says, "It is not good to jest with God, death, or the devil; for the first neither can nor will be mocked, the second mocks all men one time or other, and the third puts an eternal sarcasm on those that are too familiar with him." Adieu.

Paris, 30th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1662.

XI.—To DIGNET OGLOU.

GOD unravel my soul, reverse my faculties, turn my nature inside out, make me a monster of a new predicament; or annihilate me, which he pleases, if I am not true to my trust; yet the ministers of the Porte suspect me.

By the thoughts of Mahomet our holy lawgiver, whilst he was climbing the boundless heights of the firmament, I have a heart like the Roman Curtius, who bravely leaped into the fathomless abyss to save his country from ruin. They mistake Mahmut, who think he will be pimped out of his loyalty by frowns or smiles, flatteries or threats, gold or tortures. I would run the risk of damnation itself to serve my sovereign; or do any thing becoming a man of honour; yet my superiors use me like a villain or a traitor; their letters are full of reproaches and threatenings, as if I were not worthy to live. It is strange to me whence all this malice should proceed; and that after I have done and suffered all that could be expected from a muselman in my post, to demonstrate my incorruptible fidelity to the Grand Signior, I should still be persecuted as a Tiafer, and enemy to the Ottoman interest, I know not what to think of it.

If I have done any thing which deserves death or imprisonment, why do they not send for me to Constantinople, and execute justice on me? Or if I am not thought fit to continue any longer in this post, why do they not call for my commission, and give it to somebody better qualified? Either of these would be a merciful proceeding; compared with the more cruel and ignominious way they have invented to murder me; for now they put me to a lingering death, by continually corroding and wasting the peace of my soul, which is my life, with contempts and reproaches.

I am not at all troubled when they tax me with atheism, or say I am a Kyfilbaschi, a libertine, a Christian, a heathen philosopher, or when they are pleased to make a monster of me, a mongrel gallimaufry, a walking hodge-podge, compounded of Jew, Turk, Nazarene, and Epicure; in loading me with these opprobrious titles, they rank me with some of the greatest mortals, and engage even our holy prophet himself to espouse my cause, and vindicate my reputation, since he is in these very terms blasphemed by the followers of Jesus, those infidels forgetting that their own Messias was after the like manner traduced by the Jews, who called him impostor, magician, heretic, devil, and I know not what. This has been the lot of all holy men and prophets, to be envied and aspersed by the grandees of the nation and age wherein they lived, because they boldly reprov'd their vices, and taught them the sincere maxims of virtue, both by word and example; and though I have not vanity enough to list myself in the number of prophets or perfect men, yet I have reason to conclude, that all this persecution is rais'd against me on account of the liberty I take to reprehend the errors and failings of those who are slaves to the Grand Signior as well as I, though I have been commanded to do this by the most august minister of the empire. But great men in power love not to be told of their faults; they would live arbitrary as sovereigns, without the least check or controul; they will rather cherish a thousand flatterers and sycophants, than suffer one Diogenes to live.

But that which vexes me most is, that they glance upon me in some expressions, as if I were false to the trust which is reposed in me; a crime for which I ever had an invincible abhorrence, and which would sooner tempt me

a thousand times to die than to be once guilty of it. Thou knowest my temper, and I need say no more.

I should have burst with grief and indignation had I not given my resentment this vent, and that to a friend, who, by knowing my affliction, takes one half of it for his own share, and so I am eased.

Paris, 2d of the 4th Moon, of the Year 1662.

XII.—*To ABRAHIM ELI ZEID HADGI, Preacher to the Seraglio.*

THEY have a proverb here in the West, which says, “All is not gold that glitters;” and it is frequently verified in their own priests, who are generally the greatest hypocrites in the world.

I had not been long in this city before I sent a letter to Bedredin, superior of the dervises of Cogai in Natolia (whose soul is now with God), wherein I gave him an account of the converse I once had with a Jesuit; for, pretending to be a student, and retainer to the clergy, I could not avoid the company of ecclesiastics; besides, it was my interest to insinuate into their acquaintance, and, to tell the truth, I have made it a great part of my business to gain a familiarity with priests and dervises ever since I came hither.

There was abundance of reason for this on several accounts; for I improved myself much by the society of those amongst them that are learned, and I edified not a little by the very ignorance and follies of others: From some I squeezed out secrets of state, and the designs of cabals; by others I penetrated into the mysterious vices of their own order: In a word, all of them taught me

something or other which I knew not before, and I never had occasion to repeat of keeping them company.

I contracted a particular friendship with an honest friar or two in this city, who were persons of candour and learning, but now they are dead; besides, I have had no small intimacy with Cardinal Richlieu and his successor Mazarini. I tell thee, if I had not coveted the friendship of these princely priests, yet it had been impossible to escape their knowledge, as obscure a figure as I make; for it was their constant practice thus to seek out all the strangers and travellers in this city, under pretence of that great regard they had for men of merit, but in reality to pump out of them foreign secrets.

Cardinal Richlieu professed a great kindness to me, because I had been at Constantinople, and in other parts of the Grand Signior's dominions; he seemed also to value me not a little for my skill in interpreting Greek, Sclavonic, and other languages of the East: What he thought of me in his heart I cannot divine, but have reason to think he suspected me for a mussulman; and yet I wonder he never searched for the main proof, the mark of circumcision: Perhaps it was an effect of his good nature, as being loath to ruin me irrecoverably; but I rather ascribe it to Providence, which would not suffer him, it may be, to make so fatal a reflection; yet by his order, some years ago; I was imprisoned for six moons. What the meaning of it was I could never dive into; but I had a shrewd jealousy of a certain Transylvanian resident at this court; who perhaps might do me some ill offices. The world is like a lottery, wherein we must expect to meet with many untucky chances.

By what I have said, thou wilt easily perceive, that though the priests make a fair semblance of piety, mort-

sification, and other religious virtues, yet they are great busy-bodies, and wholly taken up in secular affairs.

If this were the worst character they deserve, they might pass for very good men, and necessary instruments of the public welfare, because they have the tutelage and guardianship of all men's consciences; they form them in their youth, and govern them in their ripest years; besides, they have many advantages of studying the politics more than other men, as being all educated in the academies, where, if they be not very dull, they cannot fail of becoming good historians, and indifferent statesmen; for their libraries abound with all manner of ancient and modern writers, and their conversation is generally refined and pregnant in intrigues.

But they corrupt their learning with false maxims, which they borrow from an intolerable pride and sensuality, persuading themselves that they are as far above other men, that is, the laity, as those are above the beasts; that God has bestowed on them a dignity superior to that of the greatest temporal monarchs; and, in fine, that this earth is a paradise, and themselves the gods and lords of it.

When I speak at this rate of the Nazarene priests, understand me not without restriction: There are some good and holy men amongst them, persons of unblemished manners and incorrupt sincerity; but these are very rare, and the French priests are esteemed the most sincere of any within the pale of the Roman church.

As for the Italian clergy, they are mere libertines, the most debauched and profligate fellows in the world.

Adonai the Jew, a late private agent of the Grand Signior, who had travelled up and down through all Italy, and resided a considerable time in the chief cities and towns of note, made many curious observations and re-

marks on the lives of the priests, which he set down in his journal. This I have by me now, it being sent me, according to my desire, after his death, by Zeidi Alamanzi, his successor in that station, who is at present at Venice.

I have perused this relation myself with no small pleasure, and believe it will not be unwelcome to thee to give thee an abstract of what he says.

It is possible he may exaggerate some things, and deliver himself too partially in others, out of the natural and inherent aversion the Jews have for the Christians; but thou wilt find, that in the main he insists only on such reflections as it becomes any man to make who has the least spark of common morality and reason.

In the first place, he finds fault with the ecclesiastics, in that they abstain from marriage themselves, yet recommend that state to the laity as a very holy sacrament and mystery of religion, whilst they indulge themselves at the same time in all manner of lasciviousness, wallowing in fornication, adultery, incest, and sodomy itself. He says there is hardly one priest in ten who does not keep two or three harlots, and the most reclusive dervises are either pimps to other men's lusts, or they indulge their own with the most infamous courtezans and catamites. These pretenders to perfection and sanctity are often found masquerading and revelling about the streets in the time of the carnival, with a company of whores for their attendants; nay, all the year round their monasteries are no other than stews or brothel-houses; they introduce women into their cells in a monastic habit, and so they pass for men, who come to visit them as friends, relations, or travellers. These ladies of pleasure lie thus concealed for many days and nights together; and the superior of the

convent winks at this for a little money, being most commonly as bad as any of them:

These holy fathers go marching and flourishing along the streets in the most mortified manner imaginable; you would take them for perfect fantones and idiots; yet this is all but mummery, whilst they are the most glozing hypocrites in the world, mere devils in a city, and abounding in wicked thoughts and practices.

Adonai tells a pleasant story of a young monk of St. Dominic's order at Rome: This monk was of noble extraction, and his parents were very rich and powerful in the city, on which account he was indulged in many liberties denied to the rest of his religious brethren: He was permitted to carry good quantities of gold and silver about him for his personal expences, and to wear a secular habit suitable to his birth and quality; but this liberty had like to have proved fatal to him one night during the carnival.

It was late, and very dark, when this religious bully was beating the streets upon the hunt for whores, and walking under certain piazzas near the river Tiber, he was accosted by a woman masked and in a very good dress, who spoke to him frankly, asking him the way to *Il Rotundo*. This is the name of a church in Rome, dedicated to all the saints: In the time of the Gentiles, it was called Pantheon, or The Temple of all the Gods. The monk being in one of his rambling equipages, and his inclinations equally bent on pleasure, having also an hundred florins about him, presently made answer, He would conduct her to the place she inquired for: She, after some counterfeit essays of a modest repulse, at length accepted his offer, and by the way he persuaded her into a tavern: The cunning nymph managed her business so well, that the monk, overheated with wine, and other

costly entertainments, grew so in love with her, that he forgot she was to go to the Pantheon, and offered to wait on her home : She accepted the motion, and telling him her house was seated on the banks of the Tiber, they returned the same way as they came.

When they arrived at the piazzas where they first met, three persons appeared muffled up in cloaks, two of which suddenly seized the monk, holding their poniards at his breast, whilst the third disclosing the hidden light of a dark lantern which he held in his hands, fastened on the lady, and made her unmask : As soon as he saw her face, he stamped and raved, menaced and swore he would be the death of that villain who had debauched his wife. All this was but a forelaid design : In a word, after all the parts of an abused, incensed, revengeful husband, acted to the life, at last, through the intercession of the two other ruffians, and the monk's penitent and submissive address, it was concluded to spare his life, and only strip him naked, leaving him in that condition to seek his fortune among the watch.

This was soon put in execution, and the freebooters, with all their prey, securely marched off. The poor monk, thus miserably abandoned, without garments, money, or any thing to comfort him in his calamity, or to bribe the watch, gave himself over to melancholy and despair; in regard this accident would bring an eternal infamy on him, and he should be no longer able to show his face in Rome, the seat of his nativity, nor among any of his kindred and friends. Sometimes he thought to drown himself in the Tiber, or else to counterfeit a phrenzy, and so run bawling, drivelling, and talking nonsense through the streets, hoping the rest would never be divulged.

Whilst he was in these pensive thoughts, irresolute what;

to do, the watch, walking their rounds, bolted upon him on a sudden, and seeing a naked man at that time of night in such a solitary place, at first were startled as though they had met a ghost, but recollecting themselves better, they boldly seized his person, and examined how he came in that condition.

It was in vain for him to beg, entreat, and promise any thing if they would not expose him to open shame; this did but increase their curiosity and suspicion. In a word, the place of their rendezvous being very near the same tavern where this unfortunate monk had regaled his strumpet, they led him thither, and kept him prisoner till the morning. He that kept the house remembered his face again, and knowing that the governor of Rome had a secret enmity against the monk and all his race, sent him private intelligence of this adventure, encouraging him to take this opportunity of revenge, hinting withal that he need not take notice that he knew the monk, but only punish him as an ordinary fellow breaking the laws of the city.

The governor, glad of this occasion, when the monk was brought before him, ordered him to be whipped through the very street where his monastery stood: This was done accordingly, and as he passed by the gate, his brethren, seeing him in that condition, rushed out and rescued him from the executioner's hands, breathing revenge against the governor, and all that were concerned in putting this dishonour on their house and the whole order.

I must be forced to break off before I have informed thee of half their tricks, lest I should tire thee with the length of my letters; besides, it is necessary for me to conclude, unless I would miss my opportunity, for the post tarryes for no man.

Venerable Hadgi, live thou to enjoy the serene pleasures of virtue and innocence, and pray for Mahmut that he may never be stained with the corruptions and vices of infidels among whom he resides.

Paris, 18th of the 5th Moon, of the year 1662.

XIII.—*To the CHIAUS, Bassa.*

THE French king's genius seems altogether bent on martial and politic affairs, and though he allows some moments to his love, yet the greatest part of his time is consecrated to the necessary affairs of state, and to the improvement of military discipline. This has been his course ever since the death of Cardinal Mazarini: This minister, whilst he was living, endeavoured nothing so earnestly as to divert the young monarch from minding business, by plays, ballets, and other soft entertainments; but, as soon as he was dead, the king began by degrees to forsake his youthful recreations, and look into the affairs of his government.

The first bold stroke of regal authority which he gave, was the suppressing the superintendant of the finances, a very ancient office in France, but much abused of late by those who have enjoyed it; for, having the management of the royal revenues, it has been found out that they embezzled them to their own private uses, purchasing houses, castles, towns, and the fairest estates in the kingdom, for them and their posterity.

The last in this office was the *Sieur Fouquet*, who, besides the waste he made of the king's money in this kind, was laying up an extraordinary provision of arms and powder in *Bellisle*, a sea-port of France, which gave the king so great a suspicion of his ill designs, that he went in person after him as far as *Nantes*, and being there

farther informed of a private correspondencé held between the Sieur Fouquet and some malcontents of Cardinal de Retz's party, he caused him to be arrested, and sent prisoner to the Wood of Vincennes, from whence he has since been brought to the Bastile. This was done in the ninth moon of the last year, and was the occasion of erecting a new chamber of justice, to inquire into the conduct of those who were employed by Fouquet in the management of the finances.

The great discoveries this chamber has already made of the cheats and tricks practis'd by those through whose hands the king's revenues have pass'd, will it is thought move the king to establish it as a perpetual and sovereign court of inquisition; so that not the value of an asper shall henceforth be paid out of the royal treasury without the approbation of this chamber. He has also retrench'd many superfluous offices in his household, that he may the more easily support the charges of those that are necessary.

Thou wilt better comprehend the wisdom of this prince when thou shalt know that he trusts nothing absolutely to his ministers, but pries into every thing himself: He examines matters of the smallest moment as narrowly as the most important concerns; he makes daily reformations among his domestic servants, and new-models both the army and the state, which is also no small argument of his courage, and the greatness of his spirit, in that he dares contradict the methods of all his progenitors, take the frame of this mighty government as it were to pieces, and having mended every thing that was amiss, join it together again, but after a pattern wholly depending on his own judgment. This has astonish'd the greatest statesmen of the age, who consider the boldness of the undertaking, and yet cannot find one false step in his

measures; For whereas formerly the princes of the blood, the officers of the state, the governors of provinces, with other grandees, have given frequent trouble to the kings of France, and not seldom raised civil war when any thing disgusted them, (so great was their power, and so small their dependence on the king) this monarch has, by a happy effect of his judgment and resolution, given so dexterous a turn to the whole system of the public, that the princes find themselves more aggrandised than ever, the officers of the crown perceive their dignity increased with new lustre, and the governors of provinces exercise a stronger hand over their subjects; yet all of them are reduced to an entire dependence on the king himself, not being in a capacity ever to rebel again, which is esteemed a miracle of policy. As he has thus gained the point of his subjects at home, and established his realm in the most perfect economy that can be imagined; so he has recovered a particular honour abroad, that till this time has been always disputed between the crowns of France and Spain.

It seems an ambassador from Sweden arrived at the English court in the 10th moon of the last year: The French ambassador sent his coaches to honour his public entry, as is usual between friends; but the Spanish ambassador, designing to affront the French, sent his coaches also to attend the ceremony, accompanied by his own servants, and a rabble of idle persons whom he had hired on purpose; these fell on the French as they were passing along the street, killed several of them, and by force stopped their coaches till those of the Spanish ambassador were got before them, the pre-eminence of place being the chief thing aimed at.

This was highly resented at the French court, and every body thought that a fresh war would break out again.

between the two nations on this account. The angry young monarch commanded the Spanish ambassador resident here to depart the kingdom, and when another was sent to supply his place, the king forbade him to enter his dominions. Complaints were made at Madrid, and all things tended to a rupture; till at length the King of Spain having promised to make satisfaction, his ambassador was received at this court, who assured the king that his master disavowed the action of his minister in England, and had given express command to all his ambassadors to foreign courts not to dispute the placé with those of France, but to yield it to the latter where they should both be present at the same entry. This was declared in the presence of thirty foreign ministers residing at this court, which has raised a vast reputation to the King of France among all his neighbours, and struck the greater reverence into his subjects at home.

In a word, he is looked upon as the most fortunate prince in Christendom, and every state courts his friendship: He gives the law to the rest of Europe, yet remains himself arbitrary and above controul.

How long his affairs will continue at this height is known only to God, who exalts and abases whom he pleases, who is the sole monarch of all things, reigning for ever, without the least shadow of revolution or change.

Paris, 12th of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1662.

XIV.—*To the same.*

IT was late when I finished my other letter, being the hour of the devil's range, when the infernal spirits are permitted to air themselves in this upper world. Methought

I heard the clattering echo of the gates of paradise, which are shut at that season to keep out the demons from entering and disturbing the repose of the blessed. This made me conclude so abruptly, lest some busy scribe of the dark regions should have inserted evil in my letter whilst I was asleep. I recommended myself to God, and went to bed. After two hours rest awaking, I perceived by the crowing of the cocks that the troops of hell were retired to their den, chased down by Arcturus and the guardian constellations of the South, and by the angels of the second watch: Then I arose, and cheerfully addressed myself to God, praising him for the successive benefits of day and night, and extolling his magnificent works with the exquisite order that he has established in the world. Remembering also that I was a man, and not born to sleep, but to serve the Grand Signior and my friends, I readily set pen to paper again to give thee a farther account of the French king and his court, with such occurrences as have happened of late.

This monarch is very singular in his conduct and manner of life, not brooking to be confined to the maxims of others, but squaring all his actions by rules of his own; yet it is difficult to find a fault in his proceedings: He hears the advice of his counsellors and friends, and when they have done, he convinces them in many things that they are under a mistake, which makes them admire the force of his reason, and the readiness of his wit, especially when they see the events answering expectation.

Neither is he altogether so intent on state matters, but that he sometimes gives himself the diversion of a familiar discourse with the most ingenious artists of all sorts, who find themselves much improved by the quickness of his invention, and the solidity of his judgment in the mechanics; for he is an excellent gunsmith, swordcutter, arm-

ourmaker, and every thing that becomes a king to profess.

He is a good architect also, and takes vast delight in buildings, having laid the foundations of several magnificent structures, palaces of a noble design, and intended to outvie the most polite and glorious fabrics of ancient Greece and Rome; for I tell thee this monarch would not willingly come short of any of the Cæsars.

At the beginning of this year he aggrandised his court by a promotion of sixty-two knights of the Holy Spirit. I have often mentioned this order in my letters to the ministers of the Porte, and thou that hast been in France knowest that it is the next step to being made peer of the realm. I shall only inform thee, that during the ceremonies of this last promotion, the Dukes of Vendosme and Longueville had a feud about the precedency, which at last was adjusted in favour of the former; in a word, the king declared the house of Vendosme to have a right of priority before all other princes, and to succeed in the throne itself next after the house of Bourbon.

This is looked upon as a bold effort of royal power, and has startled all the court: No less surpris'd were they to see the Duke of Lorraine resign all his estates to the King of France, reserving only the possession of them during his life.

And now the king having weathered the point with all his enemies, both foreign and domestic, studies nothing more earnestly than to divert his queen, and let his subjects taste the sweets of peace, the effect of his matchless fortune, to which even crowned heads find themselves compelled to stoop and submit.

On the fifth of the foregoing moon, by his appointment, was held a tournament, or carousal, as the French call it: This is a sort of exercise on horseback, in imi-

tation of the ancient manner of fighting with spear and sword.

The place where they ran was railed about, and magnificent chioſes erected for the queen and ladies of the court to ſit in as ſpectators. The divertiſement was very pompous, and the king was one of the combatants; the reſt were the Duke of Orleans, the king's brother, the Prince of Conde, the Duke of Enguien, ſon to the prince, and the Duke of Guiſe; each of theſe led a troop of horſe into the field; that of the king was habited after the manner of the old Roman knights; the Duke of Orleans's made a figure like the Perſians; the Prince of Conde's repreſented the Ottomans; the Duke of Enguien's troops were in Indian habits; and the Duke of Guiſe's appeared like the ſavages of America. It would be too tedious to deſcribe the particular magnificences of each: Suffice it to ſay, that they were all prodigiouſly majeſtic and rich in their equipage: The courſes alſo they made were brave and full of gallantry; but the prize, which was a diamond of great value, was adjudged to the Prince of Conde by the queen-mother.

One of the former Kings of France loſt his life at this royal exerciſe, being run through the eye into the brain, by the ſpear of an Engliſh knight, then at the French court, and one of the combatants; for which reaſon the following kings of France forbore to expoſe themſelves to the like danger: But this young Mars fears nothing, being as venturous and bold as was Sultan Amurat, the trophies of whoſe victorious combat with the Perſian challenger, at the ſiege of Babylon, hang up in the treasury to this day, as monuments of his invincible courage and ſtrength. Sultan Achmet alſo took great delight in throwing the lance with his courtiers in the Atmeidan. Theſe are ſports fit for kings and great generals. and

some of the Roman Cæsars themselves would play the gladiator.

It is not lawful for me to censure or reflect on the actions of my sovereign; but I will tell thee what the French say of him by way of contempt; "That he never combated in his own person with any thing but timorous hares and hinds." It makes me blush to hear the great emperor of the East thus blasphemed by the profane mouths of infidels; and it were to be wished he would do some surprising action to raise himself another character. I say no more, but recommend thee to God and the white angel.

Paris, 12th of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1662.

XV.—*To ZEIDI ALAMANZI, a Merchant at Venice.*

THOU hast obliged me beyond my expectation, in that ample history of thy life which thy letter contains: I esteem thee not the worse because thou wert born of Christian parents, but rather put the higher value on thy merit, in that, being bred in superstition and error, thou hast voluntarily embraced the truth, without any prospect of advancing thy interest.

When a man of a noble stock, born to riches and honours, bred in softnesses and delights, and actually possessed of a fair estate, shall thus abandon his country, his relations, friends, and acquaintance, with all his native rights and enjoyments, purely for the love of God, resigning himself wholly to the will of destiny and the conduct of providence, without consulting his own ease and delight in this world, it is an evident sign of a faithful heart, and that his integrity is without stain.

All this, and much more it seems thou hast done, and

therefore thou canst not fail of being happy in this world, and in paradise.

I am extremely pleased in reading the various adventures of thy youth, thy early inclinations to visit foreign countries, and thy actual travels through Europe, Asia, and Africa: This is the only way to learn true and complete wisdom; for a man edifies a thousand times more by his own personal experience of things, than by all the most elegant descriptions that can be made by others; besides, the advantage of becoming expert in the several languages and dialects of the earth, which he can never learn so perfectly in books, as by conversing with the natives of each country through which he passes.

Beyond all this, there is an infinite pleasure in seeing the variety of objects which every where expose themselves to a traveller's eye: There is nothing more delightful to human nature, than to try all things: Man is cloyed with what is too familiar to him; the most magnificent palace would appear as a prison to him that were always confined to it; the greatest fields and most shady groves would afford us no refreshment, if we had not liberty to straggle out of them when we pleased. Man is naturally wild as other animals, and it is as bad as death to be restrained of his freedom. I had rather, at certain seasons, range in a wilderness, all overrun with weeds and briars, than in the most regular and fragrant garden in the world: I would willingly choose the fatigue of climbing up a high, steep, craggy mountain, for the sake of a new and larger prospect, before the ease of walking always in a low valley, or even plain, though graced with never so many inviting objects, which must always be the same; so fullsome are the very pleasures we are daily accustomed to.

I doubt not but that it was very agreeable to thee in

thy journeys, when every remove thou madest from stage to stage promised thee something novel and fresh: A man in such cases, is apt to think the sun himself new, who has shined upon him from his nativity; the air, the earth, and waters appear not the same elements in different places; or if our reason convinces us their nature is not changed, yet we look upon them as masqueraders, every day in a new dress; especially when we go from one region and climate to another, the strangeness of the disguise is heightened: So infinite a variety presents itself to those who travel.

But nothing affords a man greater delight than to be familiarly acquainted with the different habits, laws, customs, manners, and religions of mortals like himself: To see them in one part of the world adoring the sun, because he shines on them but once a-year, whilst all the rest of the time they are shut up in continual darkness, very near being starved with cold, and making hard shifts to live; in another, to behold them grimacing, and hear them cursing that glorious planet because he is always too near them, rendering their countries barren, drying up their water, and scorching their persons almost to death, must needs be delightful to a contemplative man. And for aught we know, the laughter of Democritus might be the result of as good thoughts as Heraclitus's tears: Who would not smile to see some paying divine honours to the scarecrow of their garden, to a tree, a hog, a dog, or any thing they first cast their eyes on in the morning, as they do in Lapland? And yet who can forbear to weep, when he sees men professing to believe the laws of Moses, and the Messias, (who both preached up the divine unity) pretending to the purest religion in the world, and bred in the study of the sciences, worship stocks and stones, pictures and images, nails, rags, bones,

hairs, bits of old wood, or any thing that their cunning priests impose upon them as adorable?

• Happy art thou, Zeidi, who art freed from these superstitions of the Nazarenes, and thrice happy in that thou hast changed them for the faith unblemished, the doctrines of truth and reason, the practices of sincere morality and virtue. Thou hast not shunned a rock to fall into a quicksand, nor abandoned idolatry to sink into atheism; but thou hast escaped from narrow gulfs and straits, into a free and open sea, from the dark fogs and mists of frozen Christianity to the bright empire of the Osmans, the serene company of true believers, where charity and zeal are in their genuine and primitive warmth.

• Since the time that thou first liftedst up thy finger to Heaven, and madest a confession of one God, and Mahomet his apostle, none of the imams or mollahs have ever attempted to circumvent thy reason with feigned miracles, foolish pilgrimages, tales of old women, fictions of poets, or any holy frauds: Thou perceivest nothing but downright integrity in the conversation of the faithful; whereas the Christians, whom thou hast justly deserted, have a thousand windings and turnings, foldings and intricacies in their doctrines and lives; so that it is almost as easy for a blind man to walk from Paris to Constantinople, as for these infidels to grope out the way to paradise, through so many meanders and mazes: They are involved in a perfect circle of error and vice.

• Praise be to God, who planted the moon in the heavens, and causes the stars to dart their refreshing rays by night, thou art happily delivered out of their snares, Let not thy residence now among them ever tempt thee to return to the religious vanities of holy trifles, which have once made thee sick at the heart. Remember that

thou bearest in thy body the mark of a true believer, the seal of a great sacrament, the character of a profound mystery, circumcision, the emblem of purity, by which thou art more ennobled than by the blood of the Polish lord, thy father, which streams in thy veins; for now thou art incorporated into the society and lineage of Ibrahim, the illustrious patriarch, and friend of God, consider that thou art as it were ingrafted into the glorious stock of the Ismaelites, born to subdue all things, and in the determined time, to possess the empire of the universe. Thou hast the honour also to serve the Grand Signior, lord of the climates and seas, majestic heir of the Ottoman house, shadow of God on earth.

Hold fast, therefore, the profession of an unblameable faith, and whatever temptation thou mayest meet with, keep thy mind always fixed on the unseen joys of paradise; the crown of just and faithful men, the reward of such as adhere to God and his prophet without finching.

Mahmut salutes thee in imagination, with a parting kiss, and an affectionate squeeze of the hand, which thou knowest was in all ages a token of hearty good-will and friendship.

Paris, 15th of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1662.

XVI.—*To the KAIMACHAM.*

THERE is like to be a breach between this court and that of Rome, if the pope does not condescend to the demands of the French King, who styles himself the eldest son of the church, and therefore highly resents an indignity that has been done him of late, in the person.

of the Duke of Crequi, his ambassador at the Roman court.

It seizes the pope's guards, on the 20th of the 8th moon, made an attempt on the life of this minister and of his wife; they also put barbarous abuses on all the French that were in that city; inso-much as the Duke and Duchess of Crequi were obliged to quit Rome privately, and retire into Tuscany; being advised to take this course by all the cardinals and other grandees that are friends to France.

The king received news of this by an express which came from the Duke of Crequi, on the 11th of the 9th moon, and he was passionately touched at so sacrilegious an injury, whereby he is not only wronged himself, but the law of nations is violated in a most notorious manner.

Wherefore, to show his resentment, on the same day that the courier came from Rome, the king ordered the lieutenant of his guards to tell the pope's nuncio at this court, that he must forthwith depart the kingdom, under the conduct of thirty horse. This was performed accordingly, and the nuncio was hurried away immediately; without suffering him to speak with any person living, save those who were to accompany him to the frontiers; and this order was publicly proclaimed in Paris. The king also wrote to the pope, demanding satisfaction for so horrible an outrage, and caused dispatches to be sent to all the cardinals in Rome, advising them to contribute what lay in their powers towards a good understanding between the pope and him, protesting, that otherwise the calamities which might follow were not to be laid to his charge. This is a modest way of threatening used by Christian princes, who do not al-

ways speak in thunder, like our eastern monarchs, when they menace war.

I relate this as a thing, which though it appears of small moment at the beginning, yet its consequences may be great and extensive, if the French king and the pope should come to an open rupture. All the princes in Europe would find themselves engaged on one side or other, and we mussulmans might live to see the whole state of Christendom disjointed, alienated, and embroiled in wars among themselves, whereby they would lay their countries naked and open to the invincible arms of the Ottomans, a lineage of high renown, and destined to subdue all things.

But it is thought the holy father at Rome will no farther provoke so daring and powerful a monarch as him of France, by justifying the insolences of his janizaries, who proceeded to that height of fury, as to discharge guns into the windows of the French ambassador, killed several of his retinue, and assassinated the Dutchess of Crequi in her coach as she passed along the streets.

Illustrious minister, these are violations not practised by the most barbarous savages; and it is an evident sign of a decaying empire, where the public faith is thus perfidiously broke. God infatuates the infidels, that he may speedily bring them to ruin; whereas he daily enlightens the just followers of the prophet, and directs them in the ways of prosperity and peace.

Paris, 3d of the 11th Moon, of the Year 1662.

XVII.—*To MAHUMMED, the Illustrious Eremite of Mount Uriel in Arabia.*

IN the name of God, benign and merciful, I approach the residence of great sanctimony, the tremendous solitude, the cave blessed by frequent visitations of angels, and by the former presence of the most sublime among mortals, Mahomet, the legate of the Eternal, the plenipotentiary of Alla, king of heaven and earth. Alla! There is but one! whose name resounds through all the orbs above, when pronounced by the faithful adorers of the divine unity on earth; and the echo thereof, from the adamantine gates of paradise, reaches the abyss of hell, striking the infernal spirits with horror and astonishment; they tremble at the sound of the dreadful word, which chains them up in their prisons of darkness; whereas, had they faith, they would rather rejoice, believing, that the same word will one day release them from their torments; for such is the clemency of the Omnipotent, as our holy doctors teach.

Oh Mahummed, friend of the Most High, and tenant to his prophet, I have experienced that it is good and wholesome to begin every thing we do or say in the name of God. Whosoever does otherwise, either fails in the progress or the end of his design, and so remains in confusion. Tago creeps into his enterprise, and through malice spoils it, robbing a man of his crown; or Negidher, the spirit of envy, winds himself in, and entangles it; or Abhis, the demon of melancholy, casts a damp on it, and bereaves the undertaker of his joy. Such is the fate of those who through profaneness, sloth, or contempt, forget to pay the due veneration we owe to the author and source of providence and good success.

Let us not therefore think the time mis-spent, which is

taken up in the praises of Him who has neither beginning nor end, Father of all the generations in this visible world, and that other which is concealed from mortals. He is the governor of our lives, and our sole patron in all necessities; let us extol and magnify his attributes without end.

I am by nature contemplative and thoughtful; but I must needs acknowledge, that I owe to my education among the Mussulmans the force of my faith and religion. The various turns of fortune and experience which I have had in the world, could never yet blot out the impressions of my early years, or diminish the reverence I have for our holy Prophet: I often revolve in my mind the series of past ages, and the histories of former times, the origin of nations, and the various laws, religions, wars, and changes; I traverse the different epochs of the posterity of Ibrahim and the gentiles, comparing the date of Israel's transmigration out of Egypt with the years of Nabonassar and the Olympiads: In all of them I find great obscurity, contradiction, and doubtfulness, which puts me upon examining the records of Egypt and the Assyrians. The antiquity of both is very great, and yet it comes far short of the Chinese chronology, and that of the Indian Bramins.

When I have tired my soul with a vain search of that which can never be discovered, when I consider the probability of an universal deluge in the time of Noah, and the arguments which almost demonstrate the contrary, comparing this with the flood of Deucalion, and that other of Ogyges; in a word, when I reflect on the numberless incongruities that are found in the registers of past ages, I cannot but conclude there is as much reason for me to believe, that God has determinately thus darkened the knowledge of mortals, as that he confounded

their language at Babel, according to the celebrated relation of Moses; whence it will be but lost labour for us, who live in these latter times, to seek for any assurance or certainty of the truth, in matters of so remote and early a date.

Wherefore, leaving every nation to their own traditions, the Jews to the manuscripts of Moses and their rabbis, the Gentiles to the fragments of Hermes Trismegistus, Orpheus, Homer, Hesiod, Theophrastus, and other sages of Egypt, Phenicia, and Greece, I, for my part, acquiesce to the volume of majesty, the great Alcoran, and the writings of our holy doctors, Arabians, the sons of Ismael, not puzzling myself with endless disputes and questions, nor censuring others who worship God after their own way, and the documents of their fathers, but firmly believing, that he who serves God according to the dictates of his reason, who is just to men and beasts, and in all things conserves an innocent purity of life, is as acceptable to the Great Creator and Impartial Judge of the Universe, as he that has had the happiness to be instructed in the positive injunctions of Heaven, the revealed will of the Omnipotent; and this I take to be the sense of our holy lawgiver, of the Messiah, and of all the prophets in general.

Doubtless that superlatively Merciful and Indulgent connives at the frailties of mortals; he pities the inevitable ignorance of some, and the fatal necessities of others; he knows the infinite variety of our bodily constitutions, and the equally different bent of our souls; he considers the force of the elements and climates wherein we live, and the unconquerable influence of the stars under which we were born. The whole system of human nature, with its most hidden circumstances, is exposed to the eyes of him who sees all things; he is so

stranger to the anatomy of his own works; therefore he requires no more of men than can be expected from the faculties with which he has endowed them; neither will he damn any man for an involuntary evil.

O Mahammed, this is my faith, my hope, and my confidence, otherwise I should despair every moment. If I am guilty of error and presumption, correct me in thy wisdom; for before thee I am but as an idiot.

Paris, 22d of the 12th Moon, of the Year 1662.

XVIII.—To HASNADAR-BASSI, *Chief Treasurer to his Highness.*

THE French have newly felt the motions of a joy, whose birth and growth was like that of a mushroom, sudden and swift, the product of a very little time, and which ended in mourning and tears. The moon of November beheld a daughter born to the Queen of France; but that planet had hardly carried the news through all the signs of the zodiac, and commanded the stars of France to celebrate a *dunalma*, before she was obliged to be the messenger of more sad tidings, and to proclaim the death of this young princess to the constellations that assisted at her birth.

In a word, she was born on the 28th of the 11th moon, and died on the 30th of the 12th. It looks as if she only came into the world to be a witness of the conclusion of the peace between her father Lewis XIV. and her grandfather Philip King of Spain, and so return to the region of separate souls.

This peace was in general terms signed and sealed long ago, but there remained some difficulties in adjusting the limits of the French conquests, which were referred to

the management of commissioners on both sides; and these, after they had debated the matter for the space of two years, at St. Omars, Arras, and Metz, at length finished their negotiation on the 25th of the 11th moon of the last year, which was just seven days after the nativity of the French princes.

This royal infant also lived to see Dunkirk, one of the strongest sea-ports in the world, redelivered to her father by the English, in whose hands it had been ever since it was first taken from the Spaniards. The king took possession of this important place in his own person, entering the town on the 2d of the last moon.

It is looked upon as a grand oversight in the English thus tamely to part with a fortress which is inexpugnable by land, and commands the northern seas; but money overrules all other considerations, and it seems the English court had occasion for gold.

There is lately a good understanding established between this king and the Emperor of Germany: They often write friendly letters one to another, and seem to be perfectly reconciled. To speak the truth, this may be called the pacific year among the inhabitants of Europe; for, excepting some skirmishes and bravados of war between the Spaniards and the Portuguese, all the rest of Christendom is in peace; and the Portuguese have so strengthened themselves by marrying their infant to the English king, that, what through his assistance and the aid of France, they have almost reduced Spain to a necessity of making peace.

Thou wilt say the Portuguese have overreached the English in the dowry they give with their infant. This is only the town of Tangier in Barbary, a place which will cost them far more to defend against the Moors than it is really worth; for these bold Africans will perpetu-

ally assault the town, and oblige the King of England to maintain a vast garrison in it, besides a multitude of other expences. This makes the Portuguese secretly smile, to find themselves handsomely rid of two great and burdensome charges, a daughter of the royal blood, and an old fortress of no use or service, save only to diminish the public treasure, and make away with some thousands of men every year.

Illustrious grandee, it is no small encouragement to the poor exiled Mahmut, that though he be maligned, slandered, and persecuted by his enemies, yet he still finds protection and friendship from the principal ministers; and that instead of checks and reproaches, to which I was formerly accustomed, my salary is now augmented to the proportion of my necessary expences; money is sent me with a liberal hand, and my slanderers are put to silence and shame.

Thou mayest acquaint the divan, that there is now at this court the eldest son to the King of Denmark: What his business is, people conjecture variously; some say it is love; others affirm it was only the desire of seeing foreign courts drew this prince from his native country.

Thou mayest also inform them, that the Duke of Savoy has married a princess of the blood-royal; they call her Mademoiselle de Valois. Eliachim the Jew lies dangerously sick of a fever.

As for me, who never had my perfect health since I came to Paris, yet I retain a sound mind, and a heart inviolably devoted to the interest of the Grand Signior, whom God long preserve on the throne of the Ottomans.

Paris, 10th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1663.

XIX.—*To the KAIMACHAM.*

HERE is a man come to this city, a Calabrian by birth, and of all countries by education; for he has been a traveller from his infancy, if what he relates of himself be true. He speaks all, or most of the languages of Europe very fluently, and is resorted to by people of divers countries, under the character of a fortune-teller and physician: He performs both parts to the admiration of all that have been with him.

The princes and nobles of France visit him daily, and so do persons of meaner birth: They discover to him their secret maladies, and this Apollo seldom fails of success in curing them. He bestows ten hours a-day in freely conversing with people of all ranks and qualities, healing the diseases of some, and telling to others their future destinies.

I went to his chamber one day, not to learn my fate; for I have little faith in modern prophets or astrologers; nor to be cured of any distemper, having no esteem for quacks and empirics; besides, I was in good health at that time; but curiosity was the only motive which led me thither, that I might improve myself in other respects by this stranger's company, and learn something which I knew not before of foreign courts, whereby I might become more serviceable to the Grand Signior in this station, and farther unravel the secrets of Christian princes; for so it often falls out, that a man reaps some considerable advantage from the society of travellers, and men of experience; and I had good reason to hope for some profit by this man's acquaintance, who is thought worthy to be courted by the grandees of France.

Wherefore I addressed myself to him with abundance of ceremony and regard, using also as much dissimulation.

as I thought necessary to conceal myself, and the design I had in coveting his friendship. I seem'd a great admirer of judicial astrology, and told him I was very ambitious to learn the rudiments of that science from him, having heard his skill highly commended; not only by vulgar fame, but by the mouths of men of sense and quality, who gave him a fair character. I said a great deal more to insinuate myself into his good opinion; but durst being company with him, he returned my compliments with much civility, and desired me to come to him at a more convenient season, and to leave my name, that he might order his servants to give me a kind reception at any time if he himself should be out of the way, because it was common to send many from the door without introducing them. I told him my name was Titus of Moldavia; and that my business at Paris was to study in the academy, in order to my preferment in the church. When he had taken this down in writing, with the hour and minute of the day, after the manner of astrologers, he begged me to excuse the necessity he was under of returning to his company; and so I took my leave.

Not many days after, I went to him again, full of hopes that I should benefit much by his company; but as soon as he saw me, he surpris'd me with this language: "Sir, you have ventured much in coming to me, for now it is in my power to discover you and your business in this city; but if I should betray any man, my gift would be taken from me. I am neither a follower of Moses, Jesus, or Mahomet, nor of any sect that is now extant on earth; but I adore the Spirit and Soul of the Universe, which is eternal and infinite; therefore I hate no man for his religion, let it be what it will; and you that are not what you seem to be, shall receive no more hurt from me in this place than the conductor of Paris,

for I am of no party or faction; all men are equally my friends who do me no wrong, and every place is my home."

Thou mayest imagine that I was in no small astonishment at this discourse; but recollecting my spirits, and considering it had always been my opinion that these fortune-tellers deal by confederacy, and suspecting that my name being known to him so long before, it was not difficult for him to inform himself something of me, or that somebody of his acquaintance who knew me had seen me go in and out from him, and so told him some of my circumstances, I made a show of going away dissatisfied, saying; "It will be but lost time to hearken any longer to you, for I perceive you know nothing of me, in telling me I am not the man I seem to be."—"No (replied he, with an obliging kind of earnestness), you are an Arabian, and serve some eastern prince incognito." Then he went on, and told me in a few words some former passages of my life: He hinted at the dangers I had been in during my residence at Paris, mentioned my captivity at Palermo, and the rencounter I had with my old Sicilian master; to be brief, he told me so many other things which I knew to be true of myself, that I grew very uneasy in his company, and yet durst not depart from him on a sudden, or show any discontent; but musing together all the dissimulation and artifice I could; I turned the discourse to other subjects, seeming very importunate to learn astrology of him; and, promising him a large gratuity if he would teach me, I fairly took leave, resolving if possible never to see him more.

Never was a man in greater anxiety than I was when I came home to my chamber, and pondered what had passed between this stranger and me. I am not credulous of miracles, prophecies, or pretended revelations; yet I

protect solemnly I could not forbear thinking he was endowed with an extraordinary faculty of divining, or at least that he was an excellent astrologer; nay, to this day I know not well what to conclude of him: He may, for aught I know, be a demon incarnate, or perhaps he is a magician. Sometimes I think one thing, and sometimes another. If he performs these prophetic parts by confederacy, still I am at a loss how he should come to know so much of me, who always thought myself the privatest man in Paris, and have neglected no methods that were proper to render me such in truth. Then I suspect my old Sicilian master is one of this man's correspondents, and has told him some of my circumstances; for I have no reason to be jealous of Eliachim the Jew. It must be some such way, or else he is more than a man, that can thus readily penetrate into the secrets of a stranger.

Sage kaimacham, I pray God defend thee from the snares of counterfeiters and false pretenders,

Paris, 13th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1663.

XX.—*To the CAPTAIN BASSA.*

WHAT I am going to relate would seem incredible to myself, and for that reason I would not give it any room in a letter to all the discerning ministers of the Porte, were it not confirmed by letters from several merchants in the north parts of Holland to their correspondents in this city; and they all agree, that on the 9th day of the moon of November, a strange man was seen to float on the sea near the shore, being supported by a piece of timber, on which he sat with a bottle of strong waters in his hand. Those who first beheld this spectacle were fishing in a small boat, and judging him to be the relie-

of some shipwreck (for there had been violent tempests in those seas about that time), made up to him, and took him into their skiff. He expressed his gratitude for this kindness in the best manner he could, for nobody understood his language; and when he was come ashore, he fell on his knees, and having lifted up his eyes and hands to Heaven, he prostrated himself, and kissed the earth. His garments were made of the skins of fishes, the hair of his head of a flaxen colour, and he seemed not to be faint for want of sustenance, which made every one conclude that he had kept up his spirits with that chemical liquor in the bottle, which was near half emptied.

As soon as he saw the rising moon, he fell on his face, and muttered certain barbarous words, knocking his forehead against the ground; then he rose and danced after a wild manner, singing pretty natural airs, and at every stop, with his right hand extended, pointed to that planet, expressing both in tone and actions much devotion and love.

Many learned men were sent for to consider this stranger, and, if possible, by signs, or other means, to discover from whence he came, and what fate or accident had thus abandoned him to the fury of the winds and waves, to the extremity of hunger, cold, and watching, and to the devouring jaws of sea monsters; but all their efforts were unsuccessful: They spoke to him in several languages, and he answered them, but still in a dialect different from any of theirs, and altogether unknown. He seemed to utter his words in a tone between whistling and singing, which made some conclude he was a Chinese, because that people pronounce many of their letters after the same manner; so do the inhabitants of Tonquin and Malabar, with other kingdoms in the east of Asia; and letters with them are as significant as words with the Europeans.

They showed him globes and maps of the world, done by several hands, and in various languages, with particular charts of all the maritime regions on earth, but to no other purpose than to excite his devotion afresh to the moon; whose resemblance he saw on some of those papers. He would smile at that sight, kiss his fore-finger, and with a religious complaisance touch the figure of that planet; then seeming to be in a wonderful good humour, he would turn round and fall a-dancing, with his arms stretched and turned in the same posture as those who use castanets or tymbals, singing all the while a sort of inarticulate sounds, but surprisngly musical and sweet; so that nobody knew what to make of him.

He appeared very temperate, modest, and resigned, refusing no meats or drinks that were offered him, yet neither eat nor drank to excess; neither was he discontented at his lodging, or any other usage, though they tried to vex him several ways, that they might see how he would vent his passion; but he smiled at all, and submitted patiently to every thing they imposed on him.

One thing was observable, that wherever he saw any water, he would run to it immediately, and wash himself as well as he could in those circumstances, never forgetting to sprinkle some toward that part of the heaven where the moon was visible; and when they led him into the fields or gardens, he would crop the grass and flowers, and, with a composed look, would throw them up in the air, adding such religious gestures as convinced every one that he did it in honour of some power above. Various were the conjectures of men about him; some were of one opinion, and others of a quite different; nobody could positively conclude any thing; neither is it possible, as I am informed, for the wisest men in those parts to find out this mystery.

Perhaps he is such another as Imaum Rapibabet, a Persian writer, mentions, who, in the year of the Hegira 502, was taken up by a merchant ship of India, in the Straits of Babelmandel, pretending to be dumb, but capable of hearing, writing, and expressing himself several other ways, if any body could have understood his language: At last he was found to be an Ethiopian slave, run away from his master, an ingenious fellow, and one that spoke all the languages of those parts, and, therefore, that he might be admired, would be sure to write in a character of his own invention, which the greatest sages could not read.

Mighty basha, thou encounterest on that element with strange monsters, and creatures under no name or predicament that is known, yet none so terrible and dangerous as cheats and impostors; from which I pray Heaven defend thee and me, for they infest both the sea and the land.

Paris, 17th of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1663.

XXI.—*To NATHAN BEN SADDI, a Jew at Vienna.*

THE term of our long mutual silence enjoined us by our superiors is now happily expired, and we have with good success managed our separate parts, without holding any correspondence together. This was only a trial of our fidelity, conduct, and obedience, or perhaps it was no more than a caprice of policy, or a vain whim of state; for it is usual with great men thus to practise experiments on those whom they design to employ in the most important affairs. Whatever it be, we have acquitted ourselves like trusty slaves; and that is enough for us.

This comes to thy hand by an Armenian merchant,

one in whom I confide. Here are abundance of that nation in Paris and other parts of France : They travel up and down from one country and city to another, under the pretext of trading, but are really spies, sent from the princes of the East to observe the councils of these western courts, the designs of Nazarene monarchs, and to take an exact estimate of the strength and riches of these infidels ; for though they outwardly profess themselves to be followers of Jesus, yet in their hearts they believe the Alcoran, and honour Mahomet our holy lawgiver.

There is a kind of magic in truth, which forcibly carries the mind along with it : Men readily embrace the dictates of sincere reason, yet those of thy nation are obstinate, and shut their eyes wilfully against the very light of nature. You overvalue yourselves and your lineage, because you are the posterity of Isaac, the son of Sarah, the free woman, and wife of Ibrahim, reproaching us that we are the offspring of Ismael, the son of Hagar, a concubine and slave : You consider not that Ismael was the eldest son of that glorious patriarch, and that by the law of Moses it is enacted, that the first-born son shall inherit his father's patrimony, though he were the son of a base subject slave or hated concubine. Did Moses make a law contrary to that of his fathers ? Or could Ibrahim, the beloved of God, do any thing contrary to the Divine will ? How then could he be guilty of disinheriting Ismael his eldest son, the flower of his strength, and first fruit of his vigour ? Doubtless, the majesty and light of God, which passed from Adam to Seth, Enoch, Noah, and Ibrahim, rested also on Ismael, heir-apparent of the divine promises, father of many princes and noble nations.

Let those, therefore, of thy nation cease to boast of their pedigree, and exalt themselves above the victorious

and triumphant *Ismaelites*, children of a high stock, a race wherein shines forth the lustre of ancient renown, and the right of primogeniture; a lineage of illustrious houses, multiplied as the leaves of the trees, numerous as the stars of heaven, prosperous in all things, by the special benediction of God; whereas thou knowest the *Israelites* never made any great figure on earth, and are now reputed no better than vagabonds throughout the world.

Your rabbis reply to this, by owning that our father *Ismael* was indeed a great prince, but that he was withal a wild and savage man, who supported his nobility and grandeur by rapine and blood, dwelling altogether in deserts and unfrequented places, robbing the caravans of merchants and travellers, oppressing the poor, and murdering the innocent; in fine, they give this character of him, "That his hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him."

To this accusation they also add another, that the princes of the East, who descend from *Ismael*, have all along, even to this day, established their thrones in cruelty, massacres, and parricides; fathers bereaving their children of the lives they gave them, and children putting their parents to death; brothers murdering brothers, and sacrificing their nearest relations to the maxims of a barbarous policy, the restless suspicions of state; and that all this is more especially manifest in the sublime house of the invincible *Ottomans*.

These are the charges of Hebrew spite, the slanders which your doctors cast on the progeny of *Ibrahim*, even on *Ismael* and his children, to this day: But I would have thee, *Nathan*, reflect impartially on things, and suffer not thy judgment to be imposed on by the sophistry of your scribes. Look back to the primitive times of *Is-*

rael, examine the written law, the records of Moses and the seniors; these thou wilt meet with frequent examples of those very crimes which you lay to our charge, true parallels of the supposed tyranny and inhuman actions with which you tax the unblemished Israelites:

Did not your father Jacob supplant his own eldest brother Esau? Did he not cheat his uncle Laban of his sheep? What was wanting to him of Ismael's valour and fierceness, he supplied with a fox-like craft and subtilty; yet how often did he plunder the children of Hamor, and boasted afterwards of the preys he had taken from them with his bow and spear?

When your fathers came out of Egypt, what a carnage did Moses their leader commit, when he commanded the sons of Levi to arise with their swords in their hands, and every man to kill his brother, his friend, and his neighbour; so that there fell that day, at the foot of Mount Sinai, three-and-twenty thousand men; yet, for the sake of this detestable tragedy, he blessed them, saying, "You have consecrated your hands this day in blood, every man in the blood of his neighbour." Behold the original of your priesthood, which is the highest rank of nobility among the Jews!

Remember how your fathers almost cut off the whole race of Benjamin, so that there were not above six hundred men of that tribe left alive; forget not also how Abimelech, of the tribe of Manasse, got the sovereignty, by massacring seventy of his own brothers on one stone. Your own records say, that God gave you kings in his wrath, among whom there was not one who was not a man of blood; and in the whole catalogue, you can scarce find four who were not tainted with sacrilege, idolatry, and other enormous vices.

In a word, Nathan, both the sons of Ismael and Isaac

were but men, and if thou hast nothing else to object against the former, but what thou must confess the latter was equally guilty of, I advise thee henceforth to lay thy hand upon thy mouth, and cease to speak evil of those against whom no man can sharpen his tongue or pen and prosper.

Paris, 22d of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1663.

XXII.—*To the same.*

I CONCLUDED my other letter something imperfectly, and short of my design, being interrupted by a sudden deluge of humours overflowing my eyes, accompanied with a tempest in my head, which at once took from me the power of thinking regularly, and of seeing how to write. I am often subject to these weaknesses of late, and to many other maladies; my body sensibly decays; age and care, watching and sickness, with a thousand casualties beside, have almost dissolved this congealed medley of the elements. Methinks I am now no more than a poor skeleton, to which nature and fortune have left a dry and withered skin, for modesty's sake, to cover its nakedness, with a few evacuated veins and arteries, shrunk sinews, tendons, muscles, and cartilages, to tack this machine of bones together, and keep it in motion; in a word, I seem to myself to be only a hobgoblin, or ghost in disguise; I cannot say incarnate (for I have lost all my flesh), but only bagged or clouted up in the most contemptible shreds, rags, and antiquated relics of mortality; like a maudlin or scarecrow, I hang together by geometry.

Yet such as I am at these years, I still possess, at certain seasons, more serene and vigorous thoughts, than in

the days of my youth, when I was full of marrow and good blood; I can feel my soul sometimes fluttering her wings, and briskly shaking off the heavy, slimy clogs of earth, of sleep, and of enchanted life, or living death; she struts and plumes herself, she mounts aloft, and glides in happy, though but momentary foretastes of eternal bliss; and then lured down again by charms of her accustomed ease and pleasure in the flesh, she comes to hand at call, and being hoodwinked from the radiant light of heaven, she tamely perches on the meanest sensual appetite, which easily conveys her to her wonted darkness. This is the changeable state of mortals, and we must not expect a fixed condition on this side the sepulchre: The noble and the vulgar are equally liable to these inconstancies of spirit; neither can the most exalted state of sovereign monarchs privilege them from the common frailties of mankind; they are no otherwise distinguished from the meanest of their slaves, than only by the vastness of their possessions, their numerous retinue, their unlimited power, and the vain pageantry of external honour.

If we examine the origin of nobility and royal grandeur, if we trace the genealogies of princes and potentates up to their fountain, we shall find the first fathers of those noisy pedigrees to be cruel butchers of men, oppressors, tyrants, perfidious truce-breakers, robbers, and parricides; in a word, the most primitive nobility was no other than potent wickedness or dignified impiety; and all the successive continuations of it by inheritance, election, or otherwise, even to these modern times, are but so many traducts of exorbitant power and honour, acquired and propagated by the most enormous vices, by practices unworthy of men, and of which the authors themselves are always ashamed; therefore they cover their unjust encroachments and invasions with the specious pre-

texts of justice and virtue, calling that conquest which is no other than downright robbery, and professing themselves patrons of men's liberties and rights, religion and laws, whilst in effect they are the greatest oppressors, hypocrites, atheists, and outlaws in the world.

This is not only true in the race of Ismael and Isaac, of whom I made mention in my other letter, but in all the families which have ever made any eminent figure and noise in the world.

What were the four renowned monarchies, but so many empires of banditti, governments of freebooters, pirates and licensed thieves? As Diomedes told Alexander the Great, "I, (says he) because I play the private corsair, and cruise up and down the seas with one single ship, am accused as a pirate: Thou that dost the same thing with a mighty fleet, art called an emperor. If thou wert alone, and a captive as I am, they would esteem thee no better than a thief: And were I at the head of a numerous army, as thou art, I should be revered as an emperor; for as to the justice of our cause, there is no other difference but this, that thou dost more mischief than I. Misfortune has compelled me to be a thief, whereas nothing but an intolerable pride, and insatiable avarice, puts thee upon the same course of life. If fortune would prove more favourable to me, perhaps I might become better, whereas thy continual successes make thee but the worse." Alexander admiring the boldness of the man, and the resoluteness of his spirit, gave him a command in his army, that so he might rob and plunder from thenceforth by authority.

But I should have begun higher in antiquity with the empire of the Assyrians, founded by Ninus, in the blood and slaughter, ruin and destruction of all his neighbours, and increased after the same methods by his wife Semi-

ramis, who begging of her husband that she might reign for five days, and he granting her request, she put on the royal ornaments, and sitting on the throne of uncontrollable majesty, commanded the guards to degrade and kill her husband; which being done, she succeeded in the empire, adding Ethiopia to her other dominions, carrying a war into India, and encompassing Babylon with a magnificent wall; at last she was killed by her son Ninias. Thus was the Assyrian monarchy established in regicides, massacres, and carnage; and by the same methods it was translated by Arbactus to the Medes, he having caused Sardanapalus, the last and most effeminate of all the Assyrian kings, to die in the midst of his concubines. Thus was treachery and murder handed down with the sovereign power, till at length Cyrus the Persian transferred them to this country, whose son Cambyfes raised the second universal monarchy on the additional ruins of many other kingdoms, cementing it with the blood of his brother and his son. Yet after all, it was translated to the Macedonians by Alexander the Great, not without an equal guilt of parricide, and other exorbitant vices; from whom at last it devolved to the Romans.

What need I mention the scandalous birth of Romulus and Remus, the twin-sons of an incestuous vestal? or their debauched education under a common prostitute, fabulously veiled by the Roman historians, under the title of a wolf, to render the origin of their empire miraculous? Why should I recount the horrid fratricide committed by Romulus on Remus his brother, or the celebrated rape of the Sabine wives, virgins, and widows? It will seem invidious to call to mind the detestable murder of Titus Tadius, the good old captain of the Sabines, with many other barbarous massacres: Yet these enormous crimes were the foundations of the Roman gran-

deur and nobility, so formidable afterwards to the whole earth; and the superstructure was answerable through all the various changes and revolutions of government, even to the reign of Augustus Cæsar, under whom Rome gained the title of the fourth universal monarchy.

This emperor, though he was esteemed the most merciful and just prince on earth, yet he established his throne in the blood of his kindred, sacrificing the children of his uncle to the ends of state; and that he might not deviate from the royal ingratitude of other princes, he barbarously extinguished the offspring of his father's brother, who had adopted him to the inheritance of the imperial dignity, scorning by an unkingly tenderness to spare the glorious names of Anthony and Cleopatra, to whom he was so nearly related, and who had invested him with the power of being so inhuman.

I will not make thee sick, by rehearsing the abominable lives and wicked actions of the Neros, Domitians, Caligulas, Heliogabaluses, Galienuses, and the rest of those royal monsters; history itself blushes to recite such prodigies of impiety, and their very names are odious to all generations.

If we pass from these mighty empires to kingdoms of less note, we shall still trace the footsteps of the same vices. Both ancient and modern records are full of these tragedies: The original kingdom of the Greeks took its rise from the parricide of Dardanus, and the female empire of the Amazons began in the barbarous massacre of their husbands. All ages and nations afford us examples of this nature; and the highest honours, dignities and commands, were ever acquired and maintained by the highest injustice.

Therefore, honest Nathan, let thou and I never envy the nobles and grandees of the earth; but contented in

our humble posts, sitting under the umbrellas of a happy obscurity, let us serve the Grand Signior with integrity and zeal void of injustice.

Paris, 22d of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1663.

XXIII.—*To CODARAFRAD CHEIK, a Man of the Law.*

THOU wilt approve the sentence that was yesterday executed on a Frenchman in this city, who said he was the son of God, and had persuaded a great many poor ignorant people to believe him. He was burnt alive for his blasphemy, and his ashes kicked into a ditch. Had he been convicted of this horrid impiety in any of the Grand Signior's dominions, he had undergone the like or a more terrible punishment; for the Alcoran expressly says, "That God has neither wife, son, daughter, or companion, and that those shall suffer eternal pains who teach any such doctrine." Doubtless there is but one God, and the eternal unity cannot be divided or multiplied, to make more gods in fraction, or procreate an offspring of diminutive deities: He, the father of all things, dwells in eternal solitude, and from an infinite retirement, beholds the various generations of the universe; they are all equally his offspring, and it is blasphemy to affirm he has a son, or a daughter, or a companion like unto himself; for he is uncreated, unbegotten, and entire, sole possessor of his own glory, without rival or competitor; there was none before him, neither shall there be any after him; he is without beginning or end.

But these infidels harbour strange opinions about a trinity of Gods, and follow the doctrines of Hermes, Trismegistus, Plato, Plotinus, and other pagan philosophers, who asserted a triad in the Deity, and on that

basis founded all the polytheism of the gentiles. Hence Pythagoras drew his Tetragrammaton, by playing the chemical arithmetician, and extracting a quaternity out of three; but the poets, not puzzling their heads with the mysteries of these divine and unintelligible numbers, delivered their theology in plain gross fictions, suitable to the capacities of the vulgar; one midwiving a goddess out of Jupiter's brains; another starting a god from his thigh; but this silly fellow could not derive his pedigree so near as from a little toe of the divinity; therefore he was deservedly reduced to his first atoms, and spurned out of the world.

The French have various kinds of punishments for malefactors, but none more terrible than breaking on the wheel. This is inflicted only on notorious criminals, and the manner is thus: The party condemned is fastened to a wheel, with his arms and legs extended to their full length and wideness; then comes the executioner, and with an iron bar breaks one bone after another, till the miserable wretch is in the agonies of death, and so he is left to expire in unutterable torments; for some men of strong constitutions will retain life in this condition for twelve or more hours together.

Honourable Codarafrad, though the executions of the East are more swift and surprising than those in the West, yet they are not comparable to them for cruelty, the worst death being but a minute's pain.

Sage Cheik, I reverence thy accomplished knowledge in the laws of equity and justice.

Paris, 15th of the 3d Moon, of the Year 1663.

B O O K III.

LETTER I.—*To SOLYMAN his Cousin, at Chalcedon.*

I COMMEND thee for removing thus from place to place, and could wish that thou wouldest not only exchange thy residence through all the cities seated on the Bosphorus, Propontis, Euxine Sea, and the Hellespont, but visit by turns all the famous marts in the world.

Praise be to God we are not born in Muscovy, Russia, China, or under the narrow-souled governments of Lycurgus, Plato, and such kind of jealous lawgivers, where it would be no less punishment than the loss of one's eyes, ears, and feet, if not of life itself, to travel out of his native country, or for a stranger to come in, excepting foreign ambassadors and agents, who in China are forced to travel with their faces veiled or muffled, from the confines to the court, lest they should spy the disadvantages of the country.

Doubtless this is repugnant to the law of nature and nations, an oppression of humanity, and directly opposite to the purpose of God, when he designed and made us for sociable creatures; for the whole earth is but as one country or province, common to men and beasts; it is our element, and therefore we ought to be free in it, to range where we please, as the fowls do in the air, and the fish in the sea, without any law, restraint, or injury. Such a thought as this made Socrates, when he was asked "What countryman he was?" answer, "I am a native of the universe, and therefore free to live where I will."

Thou knowest our cousin Isouf has travelled over all Asia and Africa, with some parts of Europe: My brother

Pesteli Hali has also visited many regions in the East : Both of them have improved their estates and fortunes in the world, the one at Astracan, the other at Constantinople. Follow their steps, and thou mayest have thy heart's content. Go and observe the different manners of men, their various customs, laws, and religions ; survey the mountains, valleys, deserts, rivers, lakes, seas, cities, castles, palaces, and all the other desirable objects which embellish this globe.

But beware of the infirmity of most travellers, who,ameleon-like, change their humour and manners as the regions vary through which they pass ; mere mimics, buffoons, and apes, who place their excellency in imitating every thing they see or meet with ; thus degenerating from themselves, instead of improving their minds in true science and wisdom, and hardening their bodies, to endure patiently the injuries of the elements, with all the fatigues and contingencies of human life, which are the chief ends of travelling, next to that of learning how to serve our sovereign and our country in a more refined manner.

Selyman, never think that thou wilt deserve the character of a prudent traveller, if at thy return thou canst only boast of strange and incredible things thou hast seen, tell monstrous romances and fictions more fabulous than those of the Gentile poets ; aim at solid knowledge, and the improvements of a rational creature. As thou goest out a muffled man, so return, but with all the advantages that may recommend thee for a person accomplished in history, morals, politics, and divine philosophy.

If thou darest not undertake a ramble at large, go to thy cousin Isouf at Astracan, where he is settled in a way of traffic and merchandise : Take thy voyage by the Black Sea and the Palus Mæotis : Cast thy eyes on the

ancient kingdom of Colchis as thou failest by her shores; consider the temper of the Mingrelians, Circassians, and Tartars, with the rest of the people through whose territories thou wilt pass; and when thou arrivest at Astracan, tell my cousin Isouf that I wishest thee to take this course: He will respect thee for thy uncle's recommendation: Show him this letter, and let his own eyes see the handwriting of Mahmut, the aged weather-beaten slave of the earth's great sovereign; the old, grey, grizzled watchman of the sublime Porte, which is the refuge of mortals. He will find many opportunities to advance thee. But I advise thee to wean thyself from all fondness, inconstancy, and discontent: Be true to thy trust, sedulous and active, patient and resigned; take all things as they come from destiny, without being peevish or fretful.

So may God bless thee, and give thee the riches of the earth, and the sweet influences of heaven, make thee happy here and hereafter; finally, may thy rest be on high in paradise.

Paris, 1st of the 5th Moon, of the Year 1663.

II.—To PESTELI HALI, *his Brother, Master of the Customs at Constantinople.*

THERE is no doubt but when thou wast in the Indies, the names of Sultan Dara, Saja, Aurengzebe, and Morad Batche, were not less known to thee than that of their father Cha Iehan, the Grand Mogul. Thy business, as well as curiosity, called thee often to the court, where thou hast heard the characters of these young princes, whose early years furnished the world with matter of noise and great expectations, and gave the old mo-

narch that beget them trouble and care enough to keep them in order, and prevent their machinations against one another, as well as against himself; for in those days he saw his family divided into factions, and a royal envy, mixed with ambition, whetting brothers and sisters against each other, who by nature were made for the offices of reciprocal love.

Surely it is but a glorious infelicity for children to be thus born candidates of a crown, when each is obliged, by a principle of self-preservation, to pursue his claim in a method wholly repugnant to humanity, and the affection that is due to those of the same blood, when shaking off all tenderness and compassion, the sons of one mother must sheath their swords in each others bowels, to prevent their own fate, and ravish a crown by force to save their lives.

Yet this is the misfortune of all the eastern courts, that they cannot see a prince ascend the throne without the slaughter of his brethren, and all that can be suspected to pretend or stand in competition with him for the sovereignty.

However, it must be confessed that the Indian policy in this point is far more generous than that of the Ottomans or Persians, who either immediately after their possession of the throne murder in cold blood all the rest of their lineage, or at least imprison them in some dark dungeon during their lives, and not seldom put out their eyes; and this is owing to the disadvantage the unhappy children of our monarchs lie under, in that from their infancy they are confined to the seraglio, and educated under the tutelage of women and eunuchs, even during the whole life of their father; so that he who is advanced to the throne has all the rest in his custody the first hour of his reign.

Whereas in Indostan the princes of the blood are committed to able and learned tutors, and as they grow, in years increasing also in knowledge, wisdom, and courage, they are disposed of every one suitable to his capacity; some being made ministers of state, others generals of armies, or governors of provinces, whereby each is put in a condition to make parties for himself among the grandees, and those of inferior degree, and to fortify his interest in court and city, country and camp. Thus an open field is left for all to try their wit and courage in for the sake of inheritance; and it is more equal to let them nobly skirmish for a crown, and make a warlike lottery for life or death, than set up one with the advantage and character of a butcher, and turn the seraglio to a shambles, always polluted with royal innocent blood.

But every state pursues its own maxims; and there are not wanting men of the law who justify this inhuman conduct of our sultans as the only means to prevent public distractions and civil wars, which always happen where there are many pretenders to the imperial dignity, as it lately fell out in the Indies.

I need not acquaint thee with what particular dignities and commands the Great Mogul invested his four sons: Thou couldst sufficiently inform thyself of these things when thou wast at Dehli, the capital city of Indostan; neither need I say any thing of Rouchenara Begum, or her sister Saheb, the two daughters of Cha Ichah; thou that hast been there in person knowest more of these things than I, who am obliged to the merchants and travellers for all my intelligence of the Indian affairs.

But I can certify thee of something which has been transacted there since thy return to Constantinople, the same whereof, perhaps, is not yet arrived at the imperial city.

Know then, that in the year 1655, a rumour being spread abroad through the provinces of India, that Cha Jehan was dead, each of his four sons began to lay about him for the crown: They did all that is usual in such cases for ambitious persons to do, by courting the omrahs and rajahs with large presents and large promises, by obliging the soldiery with immense largesses; in a word, by rousing up the friendship and integrity of their adherents, and by winning over strangers to their different parties, with whatsoever else was thought necessary to carry on a prosperous war against one another, for the innate desire of reigning had equally possessed them all. But destiny, which appoints and consummates human events, had reserved the crown for Aurengzebe, who surpassed all the rest in policy and dissimulation.

With profound craft this prince over-reached his younger brother Morad Bathe, and put him in chains, in the midst of Morad's own army, pacifying the officers with bribes, and the common soldiers with increase of their pay, whilst he sent their general away prisoner to one of his strongest castles. This was the first considerable stroke he gave towards the gaining a crown; for now he was not only rid of one competitor, and the most dangerous of all the rest, but also became master of his army, and all his treasure, which being joined to his own, put him in a condition to pursue his good fortune with success. Yet the war lasted almost six years; his brother, Sultan Sujah, keeping him in play on the side of Bengal, and Sultan Dara near the capital cities Agra and Dehli.

But at last they were both forced to yield to the fortune of Aurengzebe. In fine, he was established, and now sits on the throne of his fathers, whilst they fell sacrifices to the jealousy and revenge of their victorious.

brother, being, as I am informed, taken prisoners, and afterwards poisoned, or hurried out of the world some other way.

Thus passes away human glory, like a cloud driven before the wind, or like the smoke of a fire, which looks bright and gay for a while, crackles, and gives heat to all that are near it, but is either suddenly quenched with water, or evaporates into air, and is no more remembered.

Dear Pesteli, consider that this earth is not our native country; we are foreigners here below; let us improve ourselves by every thing we encounter in knowledge and virtue, without learning the vanity and vices of mortals!

Paris, 4th of the 6th Moon, of the Year 1663.

III.—*To USEPH, Bassa.*

HERE is great rejoicing for the conversion of a certain protestant prince to the faith of the Roman church: They call him the Duke of Mecklenburgh. He is said to spring from an ancient race of kings among the Vandals. This court caresses him in an extraordinary manner, as they usually do all proselytes of his high quality; as for poor and vulgar converts, they serve only to become the priests slaves and asses.

The king, who is styled The Eldest Son of the Church, and therefore ought to appear a living demonstration of her boasted virtues, has been very liberal of his favours to the new devotee, creating him Knight of the Holy Spirit, which is the most sublime degree of honour in this kingdom, next to that of being made peer of the realm.

Couriers arrive one at the heels of another from the

Duke of Beaufort, who is cruising about on the Mediterranean; but I cannot get a sight of any of them, nor learn what their expresses contain. The courtiers and statesmen here are the very whirlpools of intelligence. Whatever news is communicated to them is swallowed up and lost for ever in profound silence; they receive all, but return none again. However, people take the liberty to guess, every man according to his reason or fancy. Some say the Duke of Beaufort has engaged with a fleet of Algerines, and driven them into their harbour, with great loss on their side, and triumph on his: Others laugh at this, as only a court romance, who strive to prepossess the nation with prosperous stories of the king's arms both by sea and land; whilst a third sort affirm that those dispatches come not from the Duke of Beaufort, who they say is dead, being killed by a cannon bullet in an encounter with the corsairs of Barbary, but that they are sent from the next chief officers in the Toulon fleet, to give the king an account of his death, and receive new orders.

In the mean while, we are wholly taken up here at present with the reception of the Swiss ambassadors: They made their public entry into Paris yesterday, after they had been magnificently entertained at the Castle of the Wood. A thousand chariots accompanied them through the streets of Paris. They are brave jolly persons, sons of Bacchus, and hirelings to Mars, stout in a wine-cellar, and no cowards in the field.

Courteous bassa, thou see'st I do not forget my friends, but send to all by turn the advices that come to my hands. I wish thou wouldst favour me with a short sketch of thy pleasure with the Grand Signior in the neighbouring plains of Adrianople.

Paris, 10th of the 11th Moon, of the Year 1662.

IV.—To HAMET, *Reis Effendi*, *Principal Secretary of the Ottoman empire.*

IT is hard to determine whether the French king excels most in martial affairs, or in those of state; he is good at both; his counsels are wise, and his actions great; a man both in body and mind formed for empire; and outstripping his years in all things, save the affairs of love; these indeed he pursues with youthful vigour and passion, being by nature very amorous, and esteemed the handsomest prince of this age, by those who consider a regular shape, graceful features, and a majestic awfulness in the face, as the principal ingredients in a masculine beauty.

It is certain he is very acceptable to the ladies, who are the most competent judges in this case; and they value him so much the more because his love never abates the due sentiments a monarch ought to have of his glory; for he gratifies both passions without suffering them to interfere, managing his softest intrigues with such exquisite prudence as he still comes off a hero.

He has had many mistresses, and it is a manifest discovery of his wit that he never fastened his affections on any that deserved not the same character: She that has the greatest share in his heart at present is called the Duchess of Vaujour, a woman raised to that title by the king's bounty for the sake of his love; she has a refined wit, and that is all can be said in her praise; for, as to her body, it would hardly tempt an indifferent painter to employ his skill, unless it were in describing what the tailor endeavours to hide, and that is, a deformity much like mine, a remarkable bunch in the back; yet this great monarch loves her passionately, and will not be easily crossed in his amours.

The queen and his mother have endeavoured by divers methods to reclaim him, but all prove ineffectual: A while ago they set his confessor to work, who, with abundance of unseasonable gravity, represented to the young invincible monarch the ill consequences of unlawful love; for these infidels esteem none lawful but what is bestowed only on one wife: He said all that was proper for a jesuit to urge on such an occasion, and a great deal more, threatening the royal lover with severe penance, and I know not what. Impatient of this discourse from a subject, yet respecting the character he bore as a priest, the king, with a reserved countenance, thanked him for his pious counsel, telling him withal that for the future he discharged him from his service, being resolved to obey the old canons of the church, and confess to none but the priest of the parish. Thus the poor jesuit was discarded, and besides the king's displeasure, he has drawn upon himself the censures and curses of his whole order for disobliging so potent a monarch only to please two peevish women.

Illustrious minister, kings are as gods on earth, and they esteem it a profanation of their divinity when their actions are too narrowly scanned by their subjects.

Paris, 7th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1664.

V.—*To PESTELI HALI, his Brother, Master of the Grand Signior's Customs at Constantinople.*

THE news which thy letter imparts would affect me with incredible delight, were such a thing possible to come to pass. It is a long time since I have been weary of dwelling in Paris, and of conversing only with infidels; there is a perfect antipathy between their humour

and mine ; and it is no small violence a man does to his nature, in such a case, when all his actions and words are counterfeited. This goes mightily against the grain ; but I have thought nothing too much to do or suffer for our great master's interest, and I am still of the same resolution : Yet nature itself abhors force and restraint ; therefore it would be a vast comfort to be recalled from this disagreeable station, and placed in some other post, where I might serve God and the Grand Signior with more ease.

Besides, I have met with nothing but persecutions and reproaches from some at the seraglio ever since I came to this city, as I have often hinted in my dispatches to the grandees, and particularly once to the noble Kerker Hassan, bassa, our countryman and friend ; wherein I also implored his favour and intercession that I might have leave to retire into Arabia, and spend the rest of my days in the place where I first drew my breath, or at least that I might be permitted to return to Constantinople, and give an account of my agency in these parts, though it were to the loss of my head, if I deserved it.

I perceive that generous bassa took compassion on my sufferings, and has done his utmost to relieve me : It is to him I owe the proposal that was made in the divan, of sending me to the court of the Grand Mogul, there to negotiate some private affairs of importance for the sultan.

There is nothing that I have had a greater passion for these many years, than the happiness of visiting those remote parts of the earth, so venerable for the antiquity of their inhabitants, and the excellency of their laws, customs, religion, and government ; I mean the Gentile Indians, and not the race of the Moguls, who came out of Tartary, and are but of yesterday, in comparison with

the aboriginal people, whose genealogies and possessions of that country stretch beyond all the records in the world beside.

Ever since I read the journal of thy travels in the East, I was inflamed with an ardent desire to see that renowned nation, to converse with the Bramins, and pry into the mysteries of their unknown wisdom, which occasions so much discourse in the world.

I know not what ails me, but I promise myself more satisfaction from their books, were I capable of understanding the language in which they are written, or from the lips of those priests who have them in their custody, than from all the prophets and sages in the world: I fancy I should find something prodigiously strange and amazing in their history, yet squaring with human reason and probability of truth: I should meet with arguments which I cannot yet start, to prove the eternity of the world; arguments clear and demonstrative, such as would establish this doctrine against all objections that have or can be made to the contrary.

The idea which I already entertain of so unmeasurable a duration is only founded on my own natural thoughts, and supported by the concurrent opinion of several ancient philosophers; but I should hope to see it discovered by these Indian records to be a truth as bright as the sun, and fixed as the centre of the earth.

There is another thing for which I mightily admire the Indians, and wherein I endeavour to imitate them to the utmost of my power, that is, the justice and tenderness they show towards the beasts. It is a thing which needs a considerable expiation if by chance they kill any living creature; but if they do it wilfully, out of cruel wantonness or malice, and not in their own defence, it is punished with death, no less than if they had murdered

a man: No care of health, nor fear of dissolution by sickness, can tempt one of the Bramin race to taste a bit of flesh; much less could they be induced, by the mere pleasure of their appetites, to commit that which they esteem so enormous a sin, and the very fountain of all other vices. They count it the greatest injustice that can be to sustain their own lives by the death of any of their fellow-animals; and they esteem it a pusillanimity unbecoming a man when he dares not venture his life on the fruits of the earth, and the milk of cattle, which he may enjoy in innocence, and nature affords him more than enough of all sorts of lawful nourishment.

This religious abstinence is the mother of heroic virtues, and those who practise it inviolably are always in a state to contemn the world, death, and all momentary things. Hence it is that the Indians go to the invisible world as cheerfully as they would take a journey to China and Persia, Turkey, or any other part of the earth; for they esteem death no other than a setting out or voyage of the soul to a more agreeable region.

But I need not insist so much on these things to thee who has been among them, and are familiarly acquainted with their genius and inclination: I slide into this discourse insensibly, by the pleasure I take in thinking of these people and their admirable virtues, as a man falls in love with a beautiful woman by attentively gazing on her, and many times forgets himself and the business he was about, commits errors and indecencies, and, through the confusion of his spirits, is quite lost, like one in a wood.

To return, therefore, to my purpose: A journey to the Indies would be very pleasant to me on several other accounts. The very stars of my nativity inclined me to travel, and from my cradle in my father's house I was

transported to Constantinople, many hundreds of leagues from the place of my birth: Thou knowest what a roamer I have been since that time, and I can assure thee I retain the same disposition still. But there is no country under the moon which I wish to see with greater earnestness than Indostan, the very name whereof sounds almost as sweet as that of paradise: Doubtless it is the Eden of the earth in many respects; and the inhabitants believe there was no better for the original parents of mankind to dwell in, ranking the history of Moses on that subject in the number of celebrated fables. I approve not this censure of the Indians, yet I tell thee, as a mussulman, I dare say the mysterious writings of Moses are quite misunderstood by the greatest part of mankind; neither can any two of his interpreters agree exactly which was the particular situation of paradise: Some plant that garden in Mesopotamia, others in Palestine, and a third sort affirm it was in Egypt; this man will have it in Asia, that in Africa: They are divided in their opinions; and I might as well say it was under the Red Sea, between them both, and bring as many cabalistic proofs to defend it. But this signifies nothing to us, let it be where it will; every place is a paradise which a man fancies to be so, and nothing can beat me off from the conceit I have of the Indies.

.. Besides, I should take a vast delight in my journey thither, whether I went by the way of the Black Sea, and so through the ancient kingdoms of Colchis, Georgia, and Cathay, coasting along the foot of Mount Taurus, or by the more common road, through Syria, Arabia, and Persia. Either way would afford matter of thought to a contemplative man, while in some places he beholds the ruins of famous cities, and his eye revels on the spoils of time, of fire, of war, or of earthquakes; in others, he

beholds whole provinces laid waste and dispeopled, only meeting here and there a few cots, herds, or tents of Arabs, Tartars, or Circassian herdsmen, who straggle up and down the pleasant fields of Asia to pick and choose convenient pastures for their cattle.

How pleasant would it be to travel through my own country, and behold the tents of the sons of Ismael spread over the plains of the vast and horrible desert ! to meet with emirs and sheghs of Arabia, with their flocks and herds, summing it up and down, and frolicing from mountain to valley at their pleasure !

From this to pass to another variety in Persia would be equally diverting. What kind of thoughts should I have, whilst on my bed within the walls of Bagdat, the stage of so many great and renowned actions mentioned in ancient history ! I should call to mind Semiramis, the foundress of that noble city, and all her wars with the Indians and other nations of the East ; I should reflect on her policy, and the weakness of her son Ninyas ; I should consider the various translations of the eastern empire, the alternate fate of the Medes, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians ; and from thence I should naturally fall upon the conquests of Alexander the Great, the rise of the Macedonian empire, the death of that mighty hero in Babylon, and the cantoning the empire among his chief officers. Such memoirs as these would waken my thoughts of the vanity of all human affairs, as it does at this time ; and particularly I reflect on my folly in setting my heart so much on travelling to a country which I am never like to see.

For, alas, my dear brother, I am not able to endure at this age the hardships of so long a journey, as I could in my youth ; much sickness has impaired the strength of my constitution ; I am grown as tender as an infant, the

least puff of wind is ready to blow out the flame of life; and whereas formerly neither heat nor cold, hunger nor thirst, labour or watching, could hurt me, now my health receives damage from every one of these. I could not possibly outlive the fatigue and pain of travelling two or three days together, without a drop of water to refresh my panting soul; an habitual fever has made me the thirstiest man in the world. Then I am not able to bear the scorching heats of the sun, to which a traveller in those parts is necessarily exposed; I should daily dissolve like wax, or rather exhale in smoke, in the midst of so many fervours: In a word, my body is so infirm, that I am very sure to die before I can get half way to Indostan, let me take the nearest road I can.

Yet if the ministers of the Porte shall think fit to send me, I am resigned; for I take no farther care of my life than as I may be serviceable to the Grand Signior.

I intend to write to our illustrious friend about it: In the mean time, do thou for me what the prudence of a man and the affection of a brother shall suggest as most conducing to the interest of our sovereign and our own honour, which we ought to prefer to our lives.

Our mother is in health, and salutes thee with a tender embrace.

Paris, 9th of the 3d Moon, of the Year 1664.

VI.—*To HAMET, REIS EFFENDI, Principal Secretary of the Ottoman Empire.*

THIS court of late makes a double figure, the one of real sorrow for the Duchess of Savoy's death, who was of the blood royal of France, the other of counterfeit mourning for the death of Carolus Josephus, brother to

the German emperor; for they inwardly rejoice at this latter, and with the whole house of Austria were laid in their graves, that family being the only obstacle to the grandeur at which the French monarchy aspires, the only rub which Cardinal Richlieu and his successor Mazarini found in their way, when they sought to exalt the Bourbons to the empire of the west.

The rise and fall of kingdoms, the various changes of government, the alternate fate of nations, are themes worthy of a musfulman's thoughts, considering that the victorious and happy Osmans at this day possess the territories of ancient renown, the provinces and dominions which formerly made the greatest figure and noise in the world.

What is now become of the most famous monarchies of Babylon, Persia, Assyria, Macedon, Greece, and Rome? Look for the mysterious and learned kingdom of Egypt, the religious state of the Jews, the most ancient kingdoms of Sicyonians and Argives, the commonwealths of Edesdemon and Athens, with many other countries mentioned in the records of time, and we shall find them all swallowed up in the universal empire of the Ottomans.

The histories of Belus, and how he got the sovereignty by hunting; of Ninus his son, who first taught the world the methods of idolatry; of Semiramis, Ninyas, Sardanapalus, Arbaces, Belochus, and the rest of these Assyrian monarchs, found now like an antiquated tale or dream: Neither is there any more life at this time in the Babylonian and Persian registers; the mighty acts of the Nebuchadaezars, Cyruses, and the rest of those renowned conquerors, now serve but as foils to set off the more glorious enterprises and successes of our immortal sultans.

It is true the Persians at this day retain some fragments of that once vast and formidable eastern empire, and the Germans have a shadow of the ancient imperial

majesty of the Romans ; but both the one and the other are grown effeminate and weak ; they have lost the virtue, power, and fortune of their predecessors.

Thou hast travelled over all the dominions of the Sophi, and been an eye-witness of the Persian luxury, libertinism, and nakedness ; thou hast seen the offspring of heroic sages transformed to swine, dogs, asses, and other contemptible brutes, as if they had drank of Circe's cup ; so fatal is it to decline from the way of virtue, nay, so impossible even to stand still in that sacred path, without being violently pulled backward : In a word, thou art so thoroughly acquainted with the present state of Persia and all its circumstances, that I should appear too officious in pretending to describe either the country or the people that inhabit there.

But as to Europe thou professest thyself a stranger, and hast commanded me to characterise this quarter of the world ; wherein Germany makes the most majestic figure by land, England and Holland by sea ; Spain boasts of her gold, whilst France treasures it up to pay her armies, to keep foreign kings in pension, to build mighty fleets and magnificent palaces, to corrupt the German princes, and make them pimps to her ambition, instruments of her designed grandeur, which is no less than the western empire.

As for the Duke of Savoy, he is a mere tennis-ball or a shuttle-cock, bandied to and fro between the kings of France and Spain.

The Swisses are poor and mercenary, they cannot stay at home, unless they could banquet on the turfs and stones ; for all the flesh, fruit, and corn in the land, is not half enough to keep them alive, and they have little or no money but what they get abroad ; this makes them all travellers, and most of them take up the trade of war :

They serve the pope, the French king, and many other princes, for pay, and where they once engage, they are very true to their trust; but I can tell thee, they would be unwilling to fight for the Grand Signior, unless he would allow them plenty of wine, which thou knowest is contrary to the discipline of the mussulman armies; and these Swisses are the professed adorers of Bacchus.

The Hollanders are industrious and rich, they mind nothing but merchandising and mechanics, they would fain engross the trade of the Indies and the Levant to themselves: They traffic that they may be in a condition to fight, and they fight to establish their commerce, having no sense of honour, but only of profit: If they attempt any conquest, or make an invasion, it must be in America, or some other remote country; for they are only upon the defensive among their neighbours, not daring to be the first aggressors in a war: In a word, they are like a nest of pismires, that trudge up and down continually to get provision, but sting and bite those under whose protection they live, if they have an opportunity.

It is thought the Prince of Orange, who descends from an illustrious stock, will ere long reduce those republicans to another form of government. The French style him, "The Head and Heart of the United States," and these thou knowest command the hands and feet.

Germany is counted the bulwark of Christendom against the mighty power of the Ottomans and Tartars; but in my opinion one of our ambassadors at the emperor's court gave a truer description of it, when he compared Germany to a great monster with many heads and tails, which having a desire to break through a certain quickset fence or hedge, and each particular head making way where it could best among the less entangled branches, were all caught in so many different nooses by

the interposition of strong trees, and so the monster was forced to retire with shame and loss; whereas he said the Osman empire was like an animal with one head and many tails, and that one head not encountering the like difficulties, easily passed through, being followed by the tails with one consent, as the untwisted ends of a ten-stringed cord pass through a ring or hole, when the united part has led them the way.

I should have mentioned Italy, Poland, Denmark, Muscovy, and other regions of Europe, but it would be too tedious for one letter, which I should neither have time to write, nor thou patience to read at once.

Therefore I desire thee to accept of this only as a rough draught and imperfect sketch of some parts of the West; but in my future dispatches I will imitate the painters, and endeavour to draw each member and lineament of this great body to the life, as near as I can discern them by the lights I have in Paris.

Paris, 10th of the 4th Moon, of the Year 1664.

VII.—*To KERKER HASSAN, Bassa.*

MAY God multiply his blessings on thee, and cause thy heart to sparkle with fresh lights and new joys, like the sky-rockets on a dunalma or royal holiday. Accept also a small present, not worth an inventory (consisting only of a few pictures, looking-glasses, watches, and other manufactures of France), from the hands of Mahmut thy countryman, son of thy father's neighbour, and a voluntary slave of those who serve thee, if I had the honour of an opportunity.

Neither the gift, nor he that offers it, is worthy of esteem; but thou hast condescension enough to look on

both with the eye of a noble Arab, who knows how to value the sincerity of any man's devoirs and affection, which way soever he expresses it.

I can never forget the former discoveries of thy friendship to my brother Pesteli and me, and in general to all those of our house, which still encourages me to expect greater kindnesses, nay, in a manner assures me of them; because I know the nature of true generosity is such, that where it once begins to fasten on an object, it never ceases to communicate its favours, till damned perfidy gives a check to the current; and may he be damned that then has the impudence to ask for any more.

But, praise be to God, my case is otherwise; I am not in the number of the ungrateful and treacherous; and therefore with boldness I presume once more to address to the dust of thy feet, illustrious bassa, begging thy patronage and shelter from the persecution of my enemies, whose whole endeavour is to ruin me.

Thou knowest I came to Paris in the year 1637 of the Christians hegira: The sun had then revisited the sign he was in at my nativity just the eight-and-twentieth time. I was a mere youngster in the world; however, my superiors thought me fit for this employment. How I have acquitted myself in it ever since, I leave to themselves to judge; yet, for fashion's sake, they will be always finding faults; one sycophant or other is perpetually railing against me, when they find any of the visiers and other grandees in a humour to hearken to them. I fancy it is for want of discourse; when they have nothing else to talk of, then they fall a-censuring of poor Mahmut, who undergoes more fatigues than an hundred thousand such * Thlguch as they. I cannot

* This word *Thlguch* was left so in the Italian, and the English translator knows not what to make of it.

imagine what they aim at, unless it be that they would have me turn Christian, and enter myself into some monastery.

Suffer me, my noble friend, to tell thee that a man cannot want for temptations to such a change of his faith, without being confined to a recluse life: He may be a friar or a libertine, a priest or a layman, a zealot or an hypocrite, a chimney-sweeper or an abbot, which he pleases, according as he is qualified; and I can assure thee, he that would be a good man, which is beyond all the rest, has incentives enough among the professors of the Nazarene worship, though the greatest part are wicked.

As for me, I never thought that true religion consisted in empty names and titles, in forms and ceremonies, in parties and factions, or in any thing but in a life conform to reason and to the will of God.

They take me here at Paris for a Moldavian rambler, that has read something more than the parish-clerks; and because they know I understand Greek, Slavonian; and two or three languages more, they would fain make me a priest, doctor, orator, or any thing that I would accept of, to serve an interest; and I am compelled to use either a downright humility or a forced pride, that I may handsomely evade their courtship, convincing them sometimes that I am not fit for such dignities, at other seasons telling them I above inferior orders, and that nothing less than an archbishop's pall or a cardinal's hat will satisfy my ambition.

Thus I really dissemble, and jest myself in earnest out of ample estates, to serve God, his prophet, and the Grand Signior; yet am traduced at the seraglio for an hypocrite, an infidel, and God knows what.

Here is honest Eliachim the Jew undergoes the same

fate, whilst those of his own party, especially the rabbis, proclaim him every where for a Christian, and the Nazarenes point at him as a Turk ; only my landlord, where I before lodged, who is an honest old drunken Fleming, takes Eliachim for a saint, and swears he will have him canonised after his death, and all this for no other reason but because Eliachim treats him now and then with a bottle of wine ; so partial are all men to their own humours and interests. But the truth of it is, Eliachim is an excellent counterfeit, and my landlord is not the only man who has this veneration for him ; he passes for a very good catholic and an holy man among a great many others ; his looks are so demure, his mien so composed, and he has such godly discourse with him, about the sacraments, indulgencies, miracles, and graces of the church, when he is in company with Christians, that he would deceive the Spanish inquisition, and cheat the devil himself.

Such is the violence we are forced to use to ourselves, who live in these hazardous stations ; and yet nobody considers us, or regards our zeal for the Grand Signior ; our reputation, liberty, and lives are precarious ; we are not only in perpetual danger of the revenge of the Nazarenes, who are our real enemies, but also exposed to the envy, malice, and persecution of those who ought to be our friends.

I have often complained of the malicious calumnies thrown on me by Ikingi Cap-Oglani and his associates, and the ministers were pleased to receive my apologies ; but now I suspect greater treachery : I sent an account to the reis effendi some years ago, how I was dodged up and down the streets of Paris by a fellow whom I knew not, and what apprehensions that put me upon. I will acquaint thee farther, that being afraid of an assassin in

the dark, I armed my breast with a quire of paper, which is known to be dagger proof: I was not at all mistaken in my guess; for the last night, as I was returning home to my lodging, between the hours of nine and ten, I received a stab in my aforesaid breastplate, right against my heart. It was not so dark but I could perceive the person who gave me this blow; and self-preservation taught me immediately to seize on him, and grapple as close as I could, extending his arms with mine, at a good distance from our bodies. I am but little and short, yet I have a strong spring with my body when I am once roused, as thou wilt imagine I was now; besides, I have generally a certain presence of mind in time of danger, which fails not to prompt me with the readiest and most proper course to escape: In a word, I wrested the poniard out of the ruffian's hand, and stabbed him dead with it, not thinking it safe to make a noise, but choosing rather to die, if my strength failed me, than, by crying out for help, run the risk of worse consequences; for I had long expected some such attempt as this upon my life from my enemies at the Porte; and concluding this fellow to be one employed by them for that purpose, I thought it no prudence to have him seized by the watch and punished by the law, lest he should in revenge discover me and my business to these infidels; therefore I played the executioner myself, and sent him out of hand to another world, to prevent his telling tales in this. Thou wilt say there was no injustice in this, since it was in my own defence, and to save the honour of my sovereign. As he fell, he uttered these words in a faint broken tone; "Mahmut, my death will be revenged before long, and you cannot escape the trap that is laid for you." Then he expired.

This made me presently conclude that he was en-

ployed by somebody at the Porte, for how else should he know my true name? But, upon second thoughts, I cannot be certain but that he was set at work by my old Sicilian master, since he knew my name also; however, I have greater reason to suspect the former; because it is not probable that the infidel would take so chargeable and troublesome a method to murder me; neither had he provocation enough; besides, for aught I know, he may be dead. God only is acquainted with the truth. However, to prevent future assaults of this nature, and a great many other inconveniences, I have removed myself to a new lodging, in the most obscure corner of the city, and very remote from the place where I lived before, being resolved also not to frequent the court nor any public places, as I have done formerly, but to take other measures for intelligence.

What I desire of thee is, to represent my case favourably to the divan, that they may approve of my conduct. Do also whatever else thou judgest the part of a countryman and a friend.

As for the event, I patiently wait the appointment of destiny, for it is in vain to be too solicitous.

Adieu, high-born Kerker, and forget not Mahmut in his distress, for that is the time wherein true friendship is tried.

Paris, 17th of the 5th Moon, of the Year 1664.

VIII.—*To NATHAN BEN SADDI, a Jew at Vienna.*

BE not disheartened at the troubles which thou encounterest in this world of lotteries; but remember the adage of thy rabbis, "That evil, which is old as night, is yet the offspring of every morning." The ages are

measured exactly, and our hours are chequered with equal mixtures of happiness and misfortune ; we are not born to our own desires ; and, as not a man of us can remember how he was formed in the womb, so have we no reason to repine at what happens to us since we came out of it. Whatever power, wisdom, and goodness, took care of us then, and afterwards inspired our mothers and nurses with tenderness, and a thousand degrees of patience beyond what is recorded of Job, the same will provide for us to eternity.

The desire of knowledge killed Adam, and the same lust, propagated with his seed, destroys all his posterity : We can never be satisfied in our confinement to this world, and therefore we flounce and flutter on all sides, like fish, or birds in a net, to find a way out ; whilst we do but entangle ourselves the faster, render our restraint more uneasy, and delay the possibility of our release ; whereas patience would soon set us free, and rank us among the immortals. One thinks to escape by high drinking ; another by fevers of love or glory ; and a third conceits he shall by his gold be able to bribe the watch, who guard the last passes of this life, and persuade them to let him scamper safe to paradise. Alas ! alas ! all this is but the sophistry of our passions ; it is in vain to think of hastening or retarding our fate ; our time is set, though we know not the period ; resignation is our best lesson, and prudence the next.

Perhaps thou wilt call this a sermon rather than a letter ; but I advise thee to read it with the eyes of a stoic ; that is, whether it pleases thee or not, regard it no farther than it agrees with reason. I would fain ask of the man who expects to have his will accomplished in this life, whether he can prevail upon the sun to rise any morning within the arctic circle, or the moon to descend some

might and sweep the snow off from the top of mount Athos ; so inexorable is our destiny, so unalterable the decrees of fate.

Be not troubled therefore at any thing, but remember that thou art a part of the universe, and that nothing can betide thee which is not for the good of the whole.

What I have said is to arm thee against all the contingencies which may assault thee unawares, rushing upon thee on a sudden from behind the veil, which covers all the designs of providence and nature, destiny and chance.

I myself have lately experienced that it is good to be thus prepared for future events, having narrowly escaped death by a little timely forecast.

It is not necessary for thee at this time to know all the circumstances of my danger ; suffice it to say, that I was assassinated in the dark, killed him that designed to be my murderer, and am now forced to remove my habitation.

Eliachim thy brother in Israel will be at Vienna within fourteen days ; He will give thee a farther account of all things which it behoves thee to know, with fresh instructions concerning my new lodgings, and the method we must observe for the future in conveying letters ; we cannot be too cautious in the Grand Signior's business,

As for our own lives, let us imagine they were only lent us to serve him, on whose life so many millions of lives depend.

Paris, 18th of the 5th-Moon, of the Year 1664.

IX.—*To ZEIDI ALAMANZI, a Merchant at Venice.*

I AM obliged to send circular letters at this time to all the slaves of the Grand Signior, who have business with me at Paris, to inform them, that upon a very important emergency I am forced to change my lodgings. I have already sent away dispatches to Constantinople and Vienna on this account, to prevent the errors they might commit in addressing their letters; for the same reason I now write to thee; thou needest not inquire after the occasion of this conduct, nor wonder at any thing that happens to us extraordinary in these hazardous posts: We must expect to encounter with rubs and obstacles in serving our great master. If these difficulties have but their proper effect, which is to whet our inventions, increase our diligence, and confirm us in our zeal, all shall go well.

The soul of man never displays her faculties and perfections with greater lustre, than when she is environed with perils; these are the trials of fortitude, prudence, justice, and all the virtues. He that sinks under misfortunes and cross events, has either no soul, or it is asleep.

Courage, then, fellow-slave, and let thy heart beat a continual alarm: Be not dismayed at any thing, nor let self-love bereave thee of thy honour; but go on in thy duty, and trust thy soul to God.

Thou livest in a city where virtue and vice are in emulation, still striving to surpass each other: There are not more wicked people in the world than Venice affords, nor yet more pious and good. Follow thou the best patterns, and be happy; but do nothing by bare imitation, for that is the right way to become an hypocrite. Let all thy actions proceed from vital principles of reason and

generosity in thyself, and when thou seest rare examples, let them serve only to awaken and rouse thy innate virtue.

Send me no letters till thou hast received fresh orders from the Porte; they will furnish thee with all necessary instructions; after that, let me hear from thee as often as thou wilt; thy dispatches will be always welcome. Let them contain matter of intelligence chiefly, and that of the freshest date; penetrate into the councils of the republic where thou residest; insinuate thyself with the senators and grandees; dive into their hearts, and unlock their secrets; communicate nothing but the truth to the ministers of the Porte or to me. If thou canst discover their inclinations to a peace, or their absolute need of it, thou wilt do an acceptable service to the Grand Signior, and to the whole empire of the faithful; for then we can bring them to our own terms.

Zeidi, to God I recommend thee, desiring him to preserve thee from wine, women, and cards, which are the three capital temptations of Venice.

Paris, 1st of the 6th Moon, of the Year 1664.

X.—*To MURAT, Bassa.*

I CANNOT easily divine the reasons why I am so much neglected by the ministers of the Porte. Above four years have passed away, wherein many notable events have happened, yet nobody thought it worth his labour to inform Mahmut of any thing; so that all the notices I could gain of remote transactions, are owing either to the public news of Europe, or at best to some particular letters of merchants residing in this city, with whom I

conferve an intimacy for the sake of intelligence, and for other causes.

Thus I should have been in ignorance to this day what issue the *bassa* of Aleppo's rebellion had, were it not for an accidental interview I lately had of some French travellers who came from Constantinople: These informed me of the sudden fate of that *bassa*, when he was at the height of all his grandeur, within a few days march of the imperial city, at the head of a potent army, and just upon the point of accommodation with the Grand Signior. They much extol his bravery and resolution; for the French are naturally lovers of such as dare boldly oppose their sovereign. They equally condemn the sly perfidiousness of Mortaza *Bassa*, to whose safe conduct the generous rebel trusted his life, and by that easiness lost it; yet they applaud Mortaza's loyalty, courage, and wisdom, with the eminent services he afterwards did the empire, in leading the army against Ragotski Prince of Transylvania, which at length lifted him to the government of Babylon.

All these things had been hid from me, were not the Nazarenes my intelligencers; nor should I have known how the rebellion was carried on, after his death, by his revengeful nephew, by the son of Chusaein *Bassa*, by a Bey of Egypt, and other malcontents; yet such passages are fit for a man in my post to be acquainted with, that he may have a clear idea of his master's circumstances, and so apply himself more effectually to serve him.

It had not been amiss if I had received timely intelligence of the death of Prince Ragotski, in regard there was always a private correspondence between him and this court, which ceasing by his death, it had been worth my pains to observe whether it would be conti-

nued by his successor, or what other measures they would take.

It is true I was acquainted with this, but not by the ministers of the Porte. I heard also of all the following commotions in Transylvania, occasioned by the different factions of Michael Apafi and Kemini Janos, the two rival princes.* I was not sorry for this news, knowing that the divisions of the Nazarenes strengthen the unity and force of the mussulman empire. I was likewise informed of the fate of Mortaza bafsa of Babylon, who fell a victim to the grand visier's jealousy, with many other passages; but neither from the Porte, nor from any other hands, could I learn the least intelligence of the Venetian war, and what progress our arms have made in Candia, Dalmatia, and the other dominions of the republic, which makes me conclude, that either the Grand Signior's residence at Adrianople abated his inclinations to martial affairs (which is also the common opinion of the Christians here in the West), or that the war in Hungary for a while superseded all other designs.

However it be, it is certain the successes of the Ottoman arms, in taking Newhausel, Leventz, Novigrod, and other places of strength, with the terrible incursions of the Tartars through Moravia and Austria, put the whole German empire into a great consternation: Ambassadors are sent from the imperial court to all the Christian princes, imploring their assistance in this general danger of Europe.

Here is one arrived at this court, whom they call Count Strozzi, a person of good address, and master of much eloquence: He has prevailed on the French king to maintain at his own charges six thousand horse and foot to serve against the victorious Osmans; a great many persons of quality have listed themselves as volunteers,

and the meaner sort talk of nothing but marching to Constantinople, and driving the Turks back to Scythia, from whence they first came.

Courteous bassa, thou wilt laugh at the vanity of these infidels, who consider not, that by the grace of God, and miracles of his prophet, our emperor is the king of all the kings on the earth; the mightiest of the mighty ones; the phoenix of honour, power, and unparalleled majesty; brother and companion of the sun, moon, and stars; a prince of a mysterious and sublime lineage, in whom are centered all glory and excellency; the shadow of God on earth.

The breath of fame goes before the van-couriers of his armies, purifying all places, and filling them with veneration and terror; the dust that is raised by his heroic cavalry passing through the air, causes trembling and astonishment in the hearts of the Christians; the infidels fall before the fatal scimitars of true believers.

May the angel of the house of Ismael continue to prosper the holy offspring, to extend their conquests, and propagate the faith unblemished, that the names of Alla and Mahomet may be heard in all climates, and from the utmost borders of the earth.

Paris, 5th of the 6th Moon, of the Year 1664.

XI.—*To ISOUF, his Kinsman, a Merchant at Astracan.*

I HAVE often wondered why, among the rest of the nations in Christendom, thou wouldest not bestow the least transient visit on Spain; but, upon more mature consideration, I find thou art a man of judgment in travelling; that country lies under a very ill character for the penury of all things necessary to sustain the lives of the na-

tives, and by consequence, it is not to be thought they can spare much for strangers; a very inhospitable region, abounding in beggars, thieves, and drones, full of wine and gold, yet barren of corn and rich people.

Thou wilt not think this a paradox, when thou shalt consider that the Spaniards have all their corn from France, Germany, or Sicily; and that, for this and other reasons, Spain is but like a sieve, through which the immense treasures of Peru and Mexico are drained into other countries.

You may travel some days together in Spain without seeing any thing, save the dry face of a desert; and if you chance to meet with a house wherein you may shelter yourself and your horse, expect no better than a Ramadan entertainment; for you must fast all day, and think yourself much respected if you can get a few onions, or other roots and herbs, with a morsel of bread and flesh at night, to keep you from being sensible that you are actually starving.

Then the inhabitants are the proudest people on earth; you shall meet with none but kings, princes, viceroys, or at least men that conceit themselves such; they are also merciless in their revenge, cruel, obdurate, covetous, morose, and inexorable; in a word, Spain is the Jesuits paradise, the Jews purgatory, and the hell of women.

I therefore commend thy fortune, or thy prudence rather, which would not suffer thee to fall into the hands of those barbarians, nor think it worth thy pains to breathe an air infected with so many vices. Thou hast passed through many more inviting provinces, and art at last happily seated to thy mind. Improve thy opportunities in doing good.

I sent a letter to our cousin Solyman, advising him

to give thee a visit. If he comes, receive him kindly, and perform the part of a kinsman ; put all expences to my account, and remember that no man is born for himself.

Paris, 6th of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1664.

XII.—*To AFIS, Bassa.*

ALL Europe is alarmed with the mighty preparations which our invincible sovereign is making to invade the German empire : Great is their consternation and fear, and couriers are every where running up and down from one kingdom and court to another, to remonstrate the common danger, and beg assistance : Every body appears zealous in a cause which concerns all Christendom ; and the French king has lent the emperor 8000 men.

The Duke of Beaufort is also gone with a squadron of ships to encounter the corsairs of Algiers, and other dominions of Barbary.

The pope has sent to the emperor's assistance six thousand foot and two thousand horse ; and the rest of the emperor's allies are raising levies for him as fast as they can, it being current news, that the Grand Signior in person is at the head of two hundred thousand men, entering Hungary as a conqueror ; that he has taken above forty towns, ruined all the country where he passed through, and that in a little time he will be at the walls of Vienna.

In the mean time, this court appears insensible of the general danger which threatens Christendom ; they are altogether taken up in ballads, plays, and feasting, minding their own interest more than that of their neigh-

bours, and revelling as if the King of France were sole monarch of the world.

Here is arrived a legate from Rome, to compose the differences between the pope and this crown: His name is Cardinal Chisi. He is received with unparalleled magnificence, as if he were an angel from heaven; for the French king loves to show his grandeur on such occasions; besides, all the nations which are in the communion of the Latin church have an unreserved veneration for the Roman mufti, whom they esteem the fucceffor of Peter the prince of the apoftles.

This young monarch has a large foul; the whole world feems too little to fatisfy his ambition; he lays the foundation of defigns greater than thofe of Alexander the conqueror of Afia; he heaps up money at a prodigious rate, raifes vast armies, builds magnificent palaces, keeps kings in penfion, fupports many princes of Germany, and in a word, commands more of them than does the emperor himfelf who is their lawful fovereign.

Yet after all I cannot perceive that he lofes any degree of that refpect which he owes, and which his predeceffors have always paid to the Grand Signior, who is the undeniable arbiter of the whole world.

God grant our fovereign long life, perpetual victories, and a good ftomach to his meat, which the King of France wants to the accomplifhment of his happinefs; for at prefent he feeds like a fparrow.

Paris, 19th of the 8th Moon, of the Year 1664.

XIII.—To HAMEY, REIS EFFENDI, *Principal Secretary of the Ottoman Empire.*

THOU wilt perceive the vast respect I have for thee by my frequent dispatches; thy commands are to me as the laws and sanctions of the Ottoman empire, which I will never violate. I am no flatterer; witness my letters to some of the grandees, wherein I have not spared to reprove their vices, errors, and maladministration. If a bassa has been unjust, seditious, or engaged in rebellious practices; if he has proved an extortioner, a drunkard, or a tyrant, he has not escaped without a due reprimand. I have been bold in correcting, advising, and giving counsel to the greatest ministers in the empire; and this was a province appointed me by the flower of sublime glory, the phoenix of honour, sole favourite and trustee of the Grand Signior, the Visier Azem, in whose custody were the seals of imperial secrets, majestic decrees, and royal edicts, who being the *primum mobile* of the resplendent mussulman state, gave life, activity, and order to all the inferior orbs, springs, and instruments of government.

I received this command many years ago, and he that gave it me is gone to the world of spirits; yet the injunction remains in force, being stamped with the mysterious signet, the character of supreme and immutable authority; in obedience to which I have never warped or winched from the duty enjoined me; and to demonstrate that I did not do this in vain ostentation of the power which was given me, I have not failed all along to pay to a man of merit the attach and veneration which was his due.

It is with inexpressible pleasure I throw myself at the feet of a wise and virtuous man, with extreme compla-

gency I kiss the dust whereon he treads, and unfold all my faculties in expressing my esteem. I am full of Platonic love, and build altars in my breast to a soul deserving the innocent sacrifices of amorous passions, the incense of gratitude, and a pure affection, an holocaust of integrity and loyal friendship.

I protest, by the hopes I have of sitting on the banks of the rivers in Eden, and of being regaled in the delectable chioses of paradise, that I honour thy learning, and other sage perfections, that unblemished life, those excellent morals, and the unparalleled sweetness of modesty which crowns all thy actions. But I will say no more to a man who cannot hear his own praises: The best method of expressing my regard will be to answer thy expectations, in presenting thee with the true portraiture of these western nations and people, which thou so passionately covetest.

I must desire thee to excuse the confusion and want of order in my letters, since I send thee a medley of remarks as they come to my knowledge and memory.

It is not long ago since I wrote to Isouf Eb'n Achmed, a kinsman of mine, a merchant at Atracan; and among other things I took notice of his not going to see Spain in his travels; for he has been in most of the kingdoms of Europe, and over all Asia and Afric. In that letter I described Spain in its worst colours; now I will show it to thee in another figure, without swerving from the truth; for every country has its perfections and excellencies, as well as its defects and blemishes.

If Spain have a barren soil for corn, nature has made amends for that fault, in the purity of the air, and the plenty of fruits; the sands of her rivers are of the most perfect gold; her villages, though few, are greater and more populous than some cities, witness Madrid; her

mountains are of iron, marble, and jasper; her valleys underlaid with lead, brass, and silver. Spain of old was the Tharſis of Solomon, the Ophir of the Phœnicians, and the Peru of Rome.

In thoſe days the inhabitants of Spain were famous for their fortitude and invincible conſtancy. It is recorded, that the inhabitants of Sagunto, in the province of Valencia, when they were beſieged by Hannibal, and fore preſſed by the Carthaginians, choſe to burn themſelves, with their wives, children, and all their wealth, rather than yield to their enemies.

Their fidelity alſo was ſo remarkable, that ſome of the Roman emperors had always a guard of Spaniards near their perſons, as the French king, the pope, and other princes do now conſide in the truſty Swiſs.

But though there remain ſtill ſome ſcattered remnants of the ancient virtue among them, eſpecially in Biſcay and Caſtile, yet the greateſt part of the Spaniards are degenerated; they make no figure now in the world, but only for their gold, and the vaſtneſs of their dominions; for they poſſeſs the beſt half of America, are lords of two mighty empires, and not without large territories in the other three quarters of the world: Yet the too great extent of their power has weakened its vigour; the affluence of their wealth has really impoverished them, and by ſtraining their honour too high, they have cracked it, being now of little or no eſteem in Europe: Their glory fades at the riſing grandeur of France, which makes radiant and ſwift advances towards its zenith. This young monarch is already become the arbiter of all Chriſtendom.

Accompliſhed miniſter, there is nothing in nature ſtedfaſt; the world is but an eternal circulation of events, viciffitudes, and changes, without beginning or end. On-

ly God remains immutable in his own essence, which is the centre of every thing. May thou and I meet there, and then we shall be eternally happy. Adieu.

Paris, 12th of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1664.

XIV.—*To MUSU ABU'L YAHYAN, Professor of Philosophy at Fez.*

BY the faith and obedience I owe to Mohammed our holy lawgiver, by the Alcoran, and all that is esteemed sacred among the mussulmans, I swear thy long silence made me conclude my first letter was unwelcome to thee; but now I am convinced to the contrary; thy generous answer has removed my apprehensions, and filled me with complacency; henceforth I shall rest assured and confident of thy friendship, promising myself vast improvements from so learned a conversation, though only by letters at many hundred leagues distance.

As to what thou requirest of me concerning the various languages of Europe, I will inform thee the best I can, according to the observations I have made, and the intelligence I have received from men of letters, and from books, which are the pictures of learned souls, mirrors wherein they may behold their own perfections whilst they are on earth, and after their departure to the invisibles, other men may see the interior beauties of their mind represented to the life; for words are the perfect sculpture of the intellect, or at least its mezzotinto; they are the express portraiture of divine and human reason. Thus the Alcoran is called by some of our holy doctors, "The true image of original and uncreated wisdom."

Now of all the words and languages on earth, thou

knowest the pre-eminence has been for ever given to those of the East, and among them to the Arabian, both in regard of its purity and of its antiquity, from whence it is stiled the virgin mother of languages, the dialect of the blessed above.

Thou knowest that for this reason it is the true faithful covet no species of learning more ardently than to be perfectly skilled in so divine a speech, wherein the volume of celestial majesty was penned in Heaven before the throne of God, and sent down on earth by the hand of Gabriel, prince of the messengers who fly on the errands of the Omnipotent. It was sent, I say, to the prophet, who could neither write nor read, that the world might be convinced of its divine original; yet the incredulous will not believe; though it is manifest to any man of impartial sense, that a person altogether ignorant of letters could not possibly compose a book the most elegant that ever was penned in the world, and wherein not the least blemish or contradiction can be found, from the chapter of the preface to the last versicle, which winds up the whole volume. Oh! obdurate hearts of infidels! Oh! wilfully blind, that shut their eyes against the splendours of eternal light! Oh! resolutely deaf, that stop their ears against the voice of God and his prophet! neither will they listen to the soft whispers which are wafted from paradise.

Such are the Nazarenes, who, for the sake of the Greek and Roman tongues, of which they are passionately enamoured, educate their children in a fair way to believe all the monstrous fictions of the ancient poets, or at least all the lying tales and legends of their own priests, which are ten times more fabulous than the former, and more inconsistent with reason; and this they do rather than be at the pains of learning Arabic, which would

instruct them in truths as clear and serene as the orient sun.

I shall say little of those two ancient languages of Greece and Rome, in regard they being now grown obsolete are only to be learned in schools; thou, no doubt, art versed in them *ad unguem*, as the Latins phrase it.

That which seems properest for me to inform thee of is, that the Roman or Latin tongue appears like an old antiquated mother thrust out of doors by her four ungrateful daughters, Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese. These are her natural offspring, begot during the Roman conquests in the West, and degenerating after that empire was in its decline; so that now they are taken for no better than mongrels or bastards. In Spanish there is a great mixture of Gothic and Moors words; the French retain many of their old Gaulish idioms; the Italian is corrupted with a hodge-podge of words, left by the Vandals, Huns, and Longobards; yet that fault is recompensed by abundance of Greek etymologies; as for the Portuguese, it is but a dialect of Spanish, and lies under the same imperfections.

The only pure maternal languages now current among the common people in any part of Europe, are the Teutonic, Slavonic, and British; the first is spoken in Germany to perfection, but corruptly in Swedeland, Denmark, and the United Provinces; the second is common to the Hungarians, Moldavians, Poles, Russians, and many other nations; the last is confined to the Welsh, a people inhabiting a corner of Great Britain, driven thither by the victorious Saxons, their conquerors, above a thousand years ago; as for the rest, they are only mixed dialects, and so not worth taking notice of; excepting one mountainous part of Spain, where the inhabitants are

said to speak pure Arabic at this day ; they are supposed to be a remnant of the Moors.

The critics here in the West use to give these following rules in reference to languages : If you would address to God, speak in Greek or Latin, because of their antiquity, purity, and majestic loftiness ; if to kings, speak in Spanish, in regard of its slow pronunciation and gravity ; if to men, use Italian ; to women, French ; to dogs, Welsh ; but if you would affright an enemy, or the devil himself, speak High Dutch.

They relate a story of a German ambassador, at the French court, who delivered his message in Teutonic, which when a certain grandee heard, and took notice of its harsh and strong emphasis, he swore it was his opinion that this was the language wherein God cursed Adam, Eve, and the serpent. The German turning to him, answered briskly, " It is possible, Monsieur, it may be so, but then I hope you will grant that French was the occasion of this curse, when the devil chose to tempt Eve in that language for its effeminacy, wheedling her à-la-mode de Paris, to eat the forbidden fruit."

Renowned Musu, do me the honour of frequent letters ; instruct me in things whereof I am ignorant ; make me familiar with the remarkables of the country where thou residest ; transport Fez, with the other parts of Afric which are known to thee, transport them, I say, successively to Paris, every moon, on a piece of paper, and I will send thee all Christendom by way of exchange ; for thus it becomes the lovers of wisdom to barter for knowledge.

Paris, 10th of the 11th Moon, of the Year 1664.

XV.—To OSMAN ADROONETH, *Astrologer to the Sultan at Adrianople.*

THOSE of thy profession here in the West are wholly taken up in contemplating a certain comet which appears in the firmament ; it is of that sort which they call bearded ; and some will have it to resemble a lion, others say it is like a dragon, a crocodile, a bear, and I know not what. There is hardly a species of four-footed beasts to which the giddy rabble do not resemble it ; and some assert it to be the perfect figure of a sword.

The mathematicians are straining all their skill to take the true dimensions of this celestial apparition ; the painters are drawing it to the life ; the poets are making songs and ballads of it ; and the more learned sages are framing astronomical schemes, like so many gins or traps to catch this meteor in ; they watch all its motions, and dodge it from one heavenly house to another ; they trace it through the most intricate paths of the sky.

If it stands still, or makes a transient address to any planet, eminent star, or constellation, we are presently alarmed with the news of it, and bid to be upon our guard, as if there were some mischief a-plotting against us above. The world is harangued with fatal predictions of wars, famine, earthquakes, and other calamities, the sure consequences of this supposed prodigy.

Tell me, thou who art conversant in the science of the stars, and the mysterious philosophy of Nature, what these comets are ? Whether they be only exhalations drawn up into the higher region of the air by the force of the sun, or whether they be more solid and durable substances ? Whether they be of a posthumous origin, like the clouds, hail, rain, snow, and other meteors, the daily products of Nature, the upstart offspring of the

elements? or whether they are in the rank of those beings, whose antiquity is untracçable, which are as old as the world, such as the sun, moon, stars, and this earth whereon we tread?

For my part, I believe it is no heresy in science, whatever it is in religion, to start new maxims; for ought we know, both in the one and the other, what we call innovation is but a reviving those principles, which, through desuetude, or the corruption of times, are grown obsolete, out of date, and forgotten, though really the most primitive and ancient truths in the world.

Thus I cannot forbear thinking there are some other globes scattered up and down the infinite expanse, besides those whose continual brightness exposes them to our eyes.

The moon, it is known, with Venus and other planets, receive their light gradually from the sun by hemispheres; so that it is certain each of these orbicular bodies is always dark by half. And where is the solecism, if we suppose there are other opaque bodies in the firmament which receive no light at all, and by their nature and qualities are incapable of receiving any but from within themselves? So we may suppose these comets to be such solid globes, made resplendent by an eruption of their central fires.

God only knows the truth in such cases; and thou art better able to decide these questions than I; therefore referring it to thy sage judgment, I pray him who made the stars, and orders their dominion on earth, to bless thee with favourable influences, that thy soul may be always like a land flourishing under the sweet aspects of Orion and the Pleiades.

Paris, 22d of the 12th Moon, of the Year 1664.

XVI.—To HAMET, REIS EFFENDI, *Principal Secretary of the Ottoman Empire.*

THE French have had so many occasions of joy of late, that it is hard to determine which affects them most nearly.

The satisfaction which the pope gave this monarch for the injuries formerly done to his ambassador at Rome, began the triumph of the French court. I have already sent intelligence of that quarrel, and how high the resentments of the king flew on the same day that he received the first news of so barbarous an affront; now I shall acquaint thee, that there ensued a treaty between them at Pisa, a city of Italy, in the dukedom of Tuscany, after the French troops had terrified them into a state-penitence, by the menacing approaches they made toward the ecclesiastical territories, through the principalities of Modena and Parma. These two are friends to France, and their interest makes them so, in regard that crowns protects them from the pope's oppression, who is always esteemed an ill neighbour by the Italian princes whose dominions lie next to his; for this Roman prelate is very potent and rich; he would in a short time be lord of all Europe in temporals as well as spirituals, were he not curbed by the King of France and his allies.

This makes all the little sovereigns round about Rome, stand in awe of the monarch who was born to command crowned heads. Wonder not at the expression; for I tell thee some of the greatest princes in Europe are his pensioners. This very quarrel with the pope has gained the French king three cardinals more than were his friends formerly.

The conclusion of the treaty was, that the pope should send a *legate de latere* into France to pacify the king's wrath, and that the militia or Roman guards, whom they call *Sbirri* and *Corfes*, should be for ever abolished, and a pyramid be erected over against their guard-house, with an inscription in Latin and French, declaring their crime and punishment.

This put the court of France into a very jolly humour; they fell presently to feasting and revelling; and the king's next project was the conquest of Barbary. To this end, he sent the Duke of Beaufort, with a fleet of great ships, to clear the seas of African corsairs, that so an army might be safely transported from Toulon, and landed on the opposite shore: His design in this was to reduce the inhabitants of those happy countries to the old idolatry of their forefathers, to plant there the Nazarene superstition, and make himself the sole lord and proprietor of Afric.

I cannot divine what success he will have in this great enterprize; but it appears as if God were angry with the Mussulmans, such continual losses they sustain by land and sea.

It is with no small grief I saw not long ago the French who served in Hungary this campaign return to Paris laden with the spoils of true believers. I cannot behold the very scimitars and ensigns which these infidels took from the vanquished Osmans hang up in their temples as trophies of their victory, without inexpressible passion and regret. It is said here the Grand Signior has lost in Hungary above thirty thousand men this campaign, whereof ten thousand were killed in one battle, and a hundred-and-fifty colours taken, with sixteen cannon.

Besides, these giasers grate my ears with another bravado, boasting that one French ship of war fought seven

hours with three-and-thirty of the Grand Signior's galleys, sunk five, scattered the rest, and came off with a complete victory.

It is a vast advantage the French have in the situation of their country, in that it is washed on the south by the Mediterranean, on the north by the main sea; so that it is easy for them to curb the greatest part of Europe on one side, and sufficiently molest the Levantines on the other. As for the western parts, this kingdom is their very centre, where all the lines of war, peace, commerce, and traffic meet and terminate. She is to Christendom what Egypt and Sicily were in former ages to the empire of old Rome, an inexhaustible granary. Whatsoever desirable things nature has frugally dropped here and there in other regions, are found in this kingdom as in their original seminary; corn is plentiful as grass, wine is almost as cheap here as water is with you in some parts of Turkey, the fens and lakes are covered with wild fowl; the meadows with sheep, deer, goats, and oxen; there is nothing scarce but hens, eggs, and true believers: I had almost forgot their remarkable plenty of salt, the bare custom of which augments the king's coffers with four millions of sequins every year.

France also abounds in hemp, a most necessary vegetable, whereof she not only makes all her own cordage and sails, but also furnishes her neighbours, which brings in a considerable revenue. There is an infinite plenty of fruits, and trees for timber, of iron, marble, free-stone, and all things necessary for building ships or houses, for defence or offence by land or sea; neither are there wanting mines of gold, silver, tin, lead, copper, and other metals; whereof men make the instruments of war, and the entertainments of peace: In a word, this country is so enriched with every thing, that some historians and phi-

losophers have called it the Parent of Plenty, others the Fountain of Earthly Bliss, the most incomparable Region of this Globe, the Epitome of the World, or rather 't little World itself.

Serene scribe, thou wilt not wonder at the universal successes of the French arms when thou considerest these things, and that here the provinces are peopled like kingdoms, the cities appear like whole provinces for multitude of inhabitants: To say all in a word, the common character of France is the same which philosophers give to Nature, that there can be no vacuum found in it.

Paris, 25th of the 12th Moon, of the year 1664.

XVII.—*To ABDEL MELEC, MULI OMAR, President of the College of Sciences at Fez.*

PERMIT me to rush into thy presence, venerable patron of philosophy, without the usual formalities of address, or punctilios of introduction; let me be admitted like a man with coals of fire on his head, as the custom is at the Imperial Porte in urgent cases; for I am newly inflamed afresh with Pythagorism, Platonism, and Indianism.

Floods, fires, and other devastations by war, famine, pestilence, earthquakes, and such like contingencies, have either quite abolished the true and primitive science of the first ages in most parts of the earth, or at least very much diminished and obscured their original splendour.

The best manuscripts are lost, unless the Indians have preserved them. Our fathers grew torpid, stupified, and desperate, under the public calamities which overwhelmed whole cities, provinces, kingdoms, and empires; there was no encouragement for a scribe or a man of letters to put himself to a needless toil in labouring to preserve the

records which came from heaven; histories of the world; invisible, celestial, perfect, and eternal; traditions of undiscoverable antiquity; pandects replenished with bright Oriental wisdom, and sealed with the Tetragrammaton, which thou knowest is the signet of the First and the Last, even of the Divinity which comprehends all things, and is itself comprehended of none.

Had they gone about such a task, they knew that some ill fate or other would swallow their writings, and bury them in eternal oblivion. Hence it is that, at this day, we can hardly boast of the footsteps of ancient knowledge, a few fragments and relics of primitive learning scattered up and down in divers authors, and much adulterated with the vain opinions and errors of after times; for every writer was either inclined or forced to flatter the age wherein he lived, and not oppose their tenets; so that now there is scarce any true philosophy extant on this side the Ganges.

How those Bramins only had the happiness to conserve so sacred a treasure, can be no other way made out than by their own constant tradition, that the deluge of Noah never reached those utmost borders of the land toward the East; and perhaps the same reason may be given for the untraceable chronologies of the Chinese their neighbours; for though they differ in the sentiments and rites of their religion, in their laws, customs, and manner of government, yet they both agree in affirming the world to be indeterminately old, putting a certain number of millions of years for an uncertain far beyond it; which is but a modest retrenchment of their own thoughts, as if they were unwilling it should be falsely censured that they aimed at an hyperbole.

They say that the first matter is co-eternal with God; as light is coeval with the sun, produced also and depend-

ing after the same manner; for as the light diffused through the air is not properly the sun, but an inseparable effect of it, so the universe is not God, but his production, ever subsisting on him, and never to be divided from his eternal essence; and, for aught I see, the most significant language in the world has no other way to express things of this abstruse nature. They are too sublime for human thought, much more do they transcend the power of speech. All the dialects on earth are too barren of words, and words too defective in sense, to describe the ineffable secrets of eternity.

As for the various ranks of beings, the infinite diversity of forms resulting from the first matter, they think it reasonable to believe that they were successively produced in time, every one in its order, and according to its perfection.

I tell thee, it appears much more rational for me to believe this, than that the first matter itself was produced out of nothing, about five or six thousand years ago, as the Jews and Christians seem to teach. Rather than starve my reason with so short an idea of the world's age, I would embrace the sentiments of Democritus and Epicurus, suppose an infinity of spaces and worlds, an eternity of generations and corruptions, a continual change not only of individuals, but of the very species of things, through the fatal concourse and blending of atoms; yet not denying the unity of the Divine Essence, nor undervaluing his providence all the while; for these things are in my opinion very compatible one with another.

I do not pretend to be singular, or set up for a dogmatist; neither am I ambitious of being esteemed ~~great~~, by venting notions above the reach of vulgar capacities: It is only the pure love of truth which encourages me to

take this liberty with thee, who in matters of philosophy art the only master of the age.

To thee, therefore, I submit all my sentiments, as to an oracle, desiring thy impartial answer; and couching the faculties of my soul in the most humble attach to thy venerable wisdom, I become mute as a mummy.

Paris, 30th of the 12th Moon, of the Year 1664.

XVIII.—*To MIRMADOLIN, Santone of the Vale of Sidon.*

WHAT is this world that on all sides invades our senses? this earth under our feet, those clouds whirling over our heads, these winds shaking the trees, that azure sky, with all its glittering ornaments? What is all this but an eternal dream, a mere shadow of God Almighty's thoughts? It is pleasant living in it, it is also painful. In his sense this universe is perfectly good, in ours it is mixed with evil. He made it for his own diversion, and our scrutiny: It is to us a field of riddles and contradictions. In summer we curse the heat, and in winter blaspheme the cold; yet we bless both the one and the other when we feel them in due measure and season. One hour this colour pleases the eye, another that, and perhaps in the next it is disgusted at them both; we never find rest or content in any thing. The softest music at some times grates our ears, like the croaking of toads; the most agreeable odours are as the smell of a sepulchre, loathsome and abominable; the most delectable wines and savoury meats at such seasons are unpalatable as the beverage and diet of hell; neither can the more insinuating charms of women put us in a better humour; all the whole system of nature joined together is not sufficient to afford us ease; nothing but a ray from the Omnipotent can alleviate our

melancholy, or give us a taste of ourselves; for we are the very Deity in scattered fragments, or we are separated drops of the Divine Essence, volatile spirits of eternity, by fate or chance fixed in proper vehicles of time and matter. O Santone! this whole corporeal universe is but a web spun from the bowels of an infinite God, and wrought with inimitable artifice to catch immaterial forms, ideas, and souls in, which are the genuine offspring of the Eternal Mind. We mortals of human race are but so many parcels of the Divinity in disguise, trepanned into bodies by certain hidden baits, magnets, and charms, lurking in embryos, with which we have some sympathy; we are all gods in masquerade; so are the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea.

Let us not therefore condemn the antique ceremonies of Gentile religion, which taught men to adore the sun, moon, and stars, the elements, and all that is within their circumference, especially the souls of departed heroes, demigods, nymphs, and the rest of those beings, which are the eldest progeny of Eternal Nature; for in so doing, they did but build altars to the Original Fountain of the universe; since God is in the winds, in the rain, in the thunder, lightning, hail, and other meteors; in the heavens and air, sun, moon, and stars; in the fire, earth, and water; in plants and animals; finally, since he is in the elements, and every thing compounded of them; he is not only in them, but is these very things, by an ineffable production of himself: And when the final consummation shall come, it will be but a withdrawing all the extended lines of his infinity into their centre, where thou and I, and every divided atom in nature shall meet, be united and swallowed up in eternal beatitude. Amen!

Amen! Oh thou Lord and Father of all things, inexhaustible abyss of miracles which know no end.

Paris, 6th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1665.

XIX.—*To the same.*

SUPPOSING it were otherwise than I have said, grant the doctrine of Epicurus true, believe that we and all things were produced by the fortuitous concurrence of atoms, yet still we have the same or greater reason to value ourselves as diminutive gods, since in this sense we must of necessity be eternal, every atom being so of which we are compounded. In the opinion of these philosophers, there is no such thing as an origin or beginning of the universe; each particle of matter with them is as old as the Divinity. We have all ranged eternally from one form and world to another, danced to the measures of Fate, been parts of the orbs above, and of the caverns below, strayed through the heavens and all the elements, taken an universal career through infinite and endless space, and are now (as fixed as we seem in these solid hulks of flesh) in the same hurly-burly as ever.

These bodies which we carry about us are not compounded of the same atoms as they were seven years ago; there is a perpetual flux and reflux of particles; we die as fast as we live; every moment subtracts from our duration on earth, as much as it adds to it; we move, breathe, and do all things by paradox; our very essence is a riddle.

With an open heart, therefore, I applaud thy religious negligence of human affairs, in that thou art divinely careless of thyself and every thing else, save only to conserve thy innocence.

What signifies it whether we believe the written law or the alcoran, whether we are disciples of Moses, Jesus, or Mahomet, followers of Aristotle, Plato, Pythagoras, Epicurus, or Ilch Rend Hu the Indian bramin? Of what import is it whether we pray or not, whether we kneel before images or in a naked mosque? It will be all one in the winding up. We are but the machines of Chance; as we live so shall we die, and God knows what will become of us afterwards; neither is it worth our while to be solicitous, since we can be certain of nothing. Perhaps every atom of which we are made may be scattered from the rest; we may be transported piece-meal into ten hundred thousand millions of worlds; and seven-fold as many years may expire before two the minutest particles of our frame meet together again. We need not to be troubled at all this; nothing can hinder us from being immortal and eternal, though it be but in fragments.

Go on then, sacred vagabond, pious rambler, holy fugitive, go on to assert, in the course of thy life, this great truth, "That all things depend on everlasting Chance or Destiny." Thy actions shall reprove the hypocrites of the age, who abound in specious words; and thy divine indifference shall condemn the hellish zeal of furious bigots, who think to please God, and atone for their sins, by sacrificing human blood, and massacring all that are not of their faith.

God, or Chance, or Fate, shall transport thee after death to happy regions, inaccessible joys, and an endless succession of bliss; every atom shall find its paradise; thou shalt mount by degrees to full, infinite, and eternal felicity. Adieu for a time.

Paris, 20th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1665.

XX.—*To ISOUF, his Cousin, a Merchant at Astracan.*

WHEN I reflect on thy happiness in having been all thy life at liberty to change thy residence, and ramble whithersoever thy fancy invited thee, and that even now at Astracan thou art no longer confined than by thy own pleasure or interest, I cannot forbear envying thee.

There is an inexpressible delight in ranging the various tracks of the earth; whereas to be perpetually shut up and imprisoned as I am, in a city so close and high built, that the very winds can scarce find way into her interior parts, is a perfect hell upon earth.

To speak the truth, Paris may be called a heap, or aggregate of cities, built one upon another, like Pelion upon Ossa, since the houses here are as high as the minarets at Constantiaople, and divided, like the air, into the lower, middle, and upper regions or apartments, or rather like the heavens, whose number astronomers assert to be nine; for with so many storeys do some houses, nay, whole streets in Paris, lift up their heads, and every storey or apartment is peopled like a bee-hive; so that in this infinite throng of inhabitants, and such as come hither about business, we are ready to be stifled with one another's breath; whereas thou knowest, in the cities all over the East, the houses are intermixed with gardens; they are low built, with terraces on the top to take the cool air on by night, with parterres, kashaneys, divans, conservatories, and all the other conveniencies for refreshing the senses, by water, wind, and odoriferous smells.

This makes me long to be at Constantinople, Damascus, Mosul, or even at Astracan, where thou residest, though that city wants many delights which others enjoy; however, I should there encounter with tiaras and turbans, the very sight of which would half cure my dis-

content. May my portion be with Tagot, if I am not tired with seeing nothing but these hats and short coats, these ridiculous Franks, these apes without tails; and then to hear them rant against the Grand Signior and all true believers, to hear them blaspheme the messenger of God, curse the alcoran, revile the musti and all the mol-lahs, with a thousand other impertinencies, which none but such reprobates, gasers, and infidels, would be guilty of; makes me either with myself deaf, or that my tongue were at liberty to answer them. But much rather would I desire to be in a place where I might enjoy my ears, to receive the salom from my friends that are mussulmans, and to hear the name of God devoutly blessed on any occasion that awakens the sense to piety.

Oh that I were among my countrymen, the Arabians, who dwell in tents, and frolic about from hills to valleys, tasting by turns the various sweets of the forest and the plain: The groves and meadows, pastures and arable grounds, cities and villages, all contribute to their delight; they want no innocent joy that the earth can afford; their wealth consists in the multitude of their sheep, camels, goats, and oxen; and for them is all their care, that they may not want grass and water in due season; as for themselves, they are resigned to Providence.

So are the Tartars, who sleep in hordes or waggons, the only cavaliers of Asia, whose life is a perpetual campaign from the cradle to the grave: Their labour and ease are derived from the same fountain, exercising themselves on horseback at seven years old, and feeding on the milk of mares as soon as they are weaned from their mother's breasts. Toil and recreation with them are one and the same thing, since they know no other pleasure but what consists in riding, fighting, and conquering, or else in death, which they believe translates them to new

joys, and those more poignant than they knew before; therefore they bravely court it at the point of a sword or the mouth of a cannon, nothing being more scandalous or hateful than a coward among them.

I protest the very idea of Palus Mæotis, and Taurica, Chersonesus, with the rest of those horrible fens and marshes on the north of the Black Sea, which encompass the dominions of the Tartars, affects me with a passion, or rather such a medley of passions, as I know not how to name. Those ample deserts, these untraced solitudes, appear to my imagination like the limits of this old habitable world, and the frontiers of some new, strange, and unknown region, some *terra incognita*, where an universal desolation and silence keep their seat for ever; where no voices are heard but those of uncouth satyrs, fawns, and other exotic tenants of the woods and moors; no other sound but the whistling and roaring of the winds; no prospect but that of trees, which have appeared from the infancy of time; and where those are wanting, the eye is wearied in a long endless waste, which nothing seems to bound but the declining arch of distant skies, or low black melancholy clouds, skirted with mists and fogs, eternal mantles of the northern climes.

This is the figure of those solitary tracks where I would choose to live, rather than in a city which stifles me with too much plenty of every thing but fresh air and honest people.

If soul, the contrarieties which we find in earthly things give a gust to each other, and the most magnificent palace would seem a prison, were a man always confined to live in it.

Cousin, I wish thee perpetual liberty and happiness.

Paris, 7th of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1665.

XXI.—To HAMET, REIS EFFENDI, *Principal Secretary of the Ottoman Empire.*

AMIDST the variety of obligations which I have to discharge, I forget not to obey thy commands. I have already in my former dispatches acquainted thee with the characters and some remarkable passages of Henry IV. Lewis XIII. Lewis XIV. Cardinal Richlieu, Cardinal Mazarini, and the Prince of Conde; now I will say something of the famous Marechal de Turenne, whose fame reaches wheresoever the French wars have been talked of for these forty years. The name of this great general is Henry de la Tour d'Auvergne, son to the Duke of Bouillon.

When his father was near his death, he called for both his sons, whereof this was the youngest, and, among other exhortations, he recommended in a special manner three things to their practice; never to renounce or change their religion, never to take up arms against their sovereign, nor to provoke the first minister.

As to the first, the Marechal de Turenne has hitherto kept it inviolably; but he has faltered in both the other, having revolted from his master's service during his minority, and opposed the interest of Cardinal Mazarini when the parliament persecuted that minister.

However, this hinders not but that he is a great soldier, and besides he is since reconciled to the king. He seems to be born for martial affairs; and they relate of him, that when he was but ten years old, and his governor missing him, had sought up and down every where for him, he at length found him fast asleep on a cannon, which he seemed to embrace with his little arms as far as they would reach; and when he asked, "Why he chose such a couch to lie on," he made answer, "That he des-

signed to have slept there all night, to convince his father that he was hardy enough to undergo the fatigues of war, though the old duke had often persuaded him to the contrary.³⁷ And, to speak the truth, no man was more careless of his body than this prince.

At fourteen years of age he was sent into Holland, to serve in the army under the Prince of Orange, who was his uncle. There he applied himself to all the discipline of war, doing the duty of a private soldier, which is the common way that cadets, or younger brothers, take to rise to the most eminent offices. He was equally forward in labours and perils, never shunning any fatigue or hazard which might bring him glory; yet he was not rash, the common vice of youth, but tempered all his actions with an extraordinary prudence and solidity of judgment, beyond what was expected from him at these years; yet, on the other side, his counsels were not slow and phlegmatic, being of a very ready forecast, and he seldom failed in his contrivances. He was soon promoted to a place of command; and the exactness of his conduct raised him a vast reputation, so that by degrees he at last arrived to that height of power and honour he now possesses. He appears indefatigable in his body, and of an invincible resolution; he hates flatterers, that think to gain his friendship by praising him, and is equally averse from making use of such fawning insinuations to others, though the greatest princes of the blood, or the first minister himself.

He has also a certain steadfastness of spirit, which cannot be warped by any artificial addresses, though made to his own apparent advantage, if they propose to him any thing that has the least semblance of what is base and dishonourable. Thus he would never consent, that the honour of taking Dunkirk some years ago should be

ascribed to Cardinal Mazarini, though that minister privately courted him to it, offering him the greatest commands in the kingdom if he would do him that service, and the Marechal knew it might prove his ruin if he did not ; yet such was his integrity and love to the truth, that by no means would he be brought to condescend to this meanness of spirit ; yet perhaps it might only proceed from the aversion which in those days he had for the cardinal. Many times it is evident, that a natural passion is made to pass for a moral virtue ; besides, perhaps he was unwilling to be deprived of the glory due to him for that important service.

He is a man of few words, and so secret in all his counsels, that no body knows any thing of his designs till he puts them in execution. Every man esteems him the most liberal prince of this age, having no other regard for money, than as it serves the necessities of his family, and enables him to oblige his friends.

In a word, whatever vices he may have, he is yet endowed with so many good qualities and virtues, that he is beloved by all the nation, and in particular favour with his sovereign, who treats him not as a subject, but as one of his most intimate friends.

May God, who has raised up this great genius to aggrandise the French monarchy, continually supply the Grand Signior with valiant and expert generals, that the empire of the faithful Osmans may increase like the moon, but never be in its wane, till that planet shall no more appear in the heavens, and the fastening of the elements shall be dissolved.

Paris, 12th of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1665.

XXII.—To ORCHAN CABET, *Student in the Sciences,*
and *Penfioner to the Grand Signior.*

(*This letter was written originally in Sclavonic.*)

THE French king has lately received a gross affront from the poets; they have often been satirical upon his loves, and now they begin to burlesque upon his money. A day or two ago, as he was newly risen out of his bed, he found on a table in his chamber a paper containing these verses:

Tu és Issue de Race Auguste,
Ton Ayeul est Henry le Grand;
Et ton Peré Louis le Juste;
Pour 'Toy, tu n'és qu'un Louis d'Argent.

Thou knowest where the force of the poet's wit lies, having travelled in France, and learnt their language. The king smiled at the reading of it, and seemed to be pleased with the frankness of the author, saying, "He was worth a thousand flatterers." He promised likewise to give him five hundred louis for his wit, if he would discover himself, as also to pardon him on his royal word; but the satirist would not venture himself, knowing that kings have more ways than one to revenge themselves of private persons their subjects. However, since the king appeared so well pleased with this, he was resolved to give him another touch of his skill; and the very next morning, in the same place, the king found these words:

Tu ne le sçaura pas, Louis,
Car j'étois seul quand je le fis.

There have been many conjectures made about the author of these lampoons; some say one thing, and some another; and there are not wanting such as fasten it on

a virgin of Collen, now residing at the court : Her name is Anna Marie de Skurman ; she is very learned, and speaks Arabic, Latin, Turkish, Greek, Italian, French, and Spanish, as fluently as her native dialect ; she is of a fine wit and piercing judgment in the controversies of philosophy and religion.

There are several epistles of her's in print, some peaced in Latin, others in French, addressed to the queen-mother, Cardinal Richlieu, Cardinal Mazarini, and others, besides a book of poems, most of them satires ; and it is this last gives the world such a jealousy of her writing the lines which were found on the king's table ; for the critics have compared them with her style, and find a very near resemblance between them.

But let who will be the author, I think the French king is wronged in the character they give him ; for though he has heaped up great quantities of gold and silver, to carry on his vast designs, yet he is no miser, being very liberal to persons of merit.

I send thee this for thy diversion, and in order to our future correspondence ; take it for an example, and be as familiar with me, remembering the old Latin proverb, "*Manus manum fricat.*"

Paris, 11th of the 6th Moon, of the Year 1665.

XXIII.—*To the CAPTAIN BASSA.*

MAY thy heart be cheerful, and thy voyage crowned with success wherever thou sailest, noble old Tarpaulin, and favourite of the god of the sea. The empire of the Ottomans has not had so brave a commander of the navy these thirty years. God grant thee good fortune against the infidels, whether on the White or Black Seas. Thou

art already famous for thy exploits on the latter, in above twenty engagements with the Cossacs, Circassians, and the rest of those thievish countries; but nothing has raised thy character so high as the last combat thou hadst with Pachicour, the renowned pirate of those parts, who threatened not only his Christian neighbours, but also the Ottoman empire, with infinite ravages.

But thou hast stemmed the tide of glory, humbled the maritime people, his confederates, and by that means made thyself a way into the Archipelago and Mediterranean, where thou sittest, as another Neptune, king of the waters.

Take not this for flattery; for I tell thee, I have not said so much to a bassa of the sea these seven-and-twenty years; neither indeed had I any reason. He that merited the most applause in all that time, was the brave Zorneslan Mustapha; and I addressed no more to him than his due; fortune did not favour him, or else he had done great things. As for the rest, they were generally men never bred to sea affairs, but minions of the court, or bullies of the city, who were better at making a noise than at any action of hazard or importance. And there were some bold renegadoes, but they played fast and loose, and nobody knew where to have them.

Treachery infects the whole world, but in these western parts it reigns as in its centre: Here is nothing but undermining and ambushes, one state trepanning another out of their guards, and then they play their own game.

It would be endless to acquaint thee with the original of the quarrel between the English and the Dutch; let it be enough for thee to know, that these people are at odds now; and, in regard the strength of both nations lies in their shipping, they are preparing to cover the northern

seas with navies ; but the islanders still get the best of it ; they claim the sovereignty of those seas, and in my opinion they deserve it. I speak according to my intelligence, being assured that no nation ever prevailed against them on that element.

They have had a terrible fight this summer, wherein the Dutch lost seventeen ships of war, besides vessels of smaller note : The commander of the English fleet is called the Duke of York, a great general, and brother to the English king ; his name was famous in France and Flanders during the Spanish war ; and though the land afforded him no farther occasions of glory, yet he has found some in the sea. Opdam, the greatest admiral that ever the Dutch could boast of, fell a sacrifice to his genius.

I am the more particular in this relation, because it is fit thou shouldst know the characters of all the brave heroes living.

Since this fight, the King of France has sent an ambassador to the English court, to mediate a peace. What issue his negotiation will have, is of no great import to us, who serve the Grand Signior, sole lord of the four seas ; but I will tell thee something which it concerns thee to know.

The King of France is going to cut a canal through part of his kingdom, by which the Mediterranean may be joined to the main sea. This is a vast design, and much discoursed of in Europe, being a parallel to what has been formerly attempted by some kings of Egypt, and emperors of Rome, to join the Mediterranean and Red Sea together, for the sake of an easier traffic to the East Indies.

Thou oughtest also to be informed of the Duke of Beaufort's exploits on the coast of Barbary : He is com-

mander of the French navy in those seas, and has done great injuries to the people of Algiers, Sarcelle, Bougie, and other ports.

Though these rebels are deservedly punished for deserting the protection of the high Porte, yet let us remember that the Algerines are musfulmans, and therefore ought not to be abandoned to the malice of infidels.

Mighty bassa, sail thou in the strength of God, against the enemies of the Ottoman empire ; and when thou hast finished thy voyage here below, may a wind of mercy waft thee over the waters which are above the firmament, and land thee safe in one of the ports of paradise.

Paris, 3d of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1665.

B O O K IV.

LETTER I.—To ACHMET BEIG.

THIS court has put on the exterior semblance of mourning, whilst they inwardly rejoice at the death of Philip IV. King of Spain : He deceased on the 17th of the 9th moon. It is possible their grief is more real for the death of the Duke of Vendosme, a prince of royal extraction, and whilst living, not far removed from a possibility of inheriting the crown of France ; but now he is gone to the grave, the general receptacle of all mortals and which makes no distinction between the noble and the vulgar.

There have been abundance of ceremonies performed, on the part of the king, the dauphin, the Duke of Or-

leans, the Duke of Valois, and other princes of the blood, for the health of the departed soul; for the Nazarenes, to give them their due, fall not short of the true faithful, in believing the resurrection and immortality to come; they consign the bodies of the dead to their sepulchres with solemn rites of religion, perfuming them with incense, and sprinkling them with holy water, rehearsing also certain sacred hymns and prayers appointed for that purpose; neither do they neglect to fast, and give alms, to perform any pious office, which is practised by the mussulmans, for their friends who are gone to the invisible state: They agree with us in abundance of good things, and if they mix some superstitious and errors, let us pity their weakness, and praise God, who guides us into the right way, and suffers us not to be seduced into the way of infidels; he is the merciful of the merciful, the joy of the elect, and the hope of all nations; should he punish men according to their hourly demerits, the earth would soon be depopulated, and void of any other inhabitants save the beasts; but he knows our mould, and remembers that we are no more than a mere froth or spume of the elements, and that in a very little time, by the course of nature, we shall vanish like bubbles, which yield to every blast of wind; therefore he spares us, and connives at our infirmities, because he is the lover of souls.

I speak this as an incentive to charity among ourselves, and to our fellow-mortals. It seems to me unreasonable, that we should pursue, with inexorable hatred, all the followers of Jesus; he was a holy prophet, humble, mild, chaste, and harmless; he did many good works himself, and commanded his disciples to imitate his example; he rebuked those among them that would have called down fire from heaven to consume his enemies, enjoining them

to return blessings for curses, prayers for blasphemies, and good for evil. There are those among them who obey his precepts; as for the wicked, I am not their advocate. If the greatest part of the Christians live contrary to the law of the Messias, let us consider also how many hypocrites, libertines, heretics, and atheists there are among those who profess the mussulman faith. Doubtless there are good and bad of all religions; and it is impossible to find an assembly of just men, without a mixture of sinners.

As for our difference with the people of Jesus in matters of worship, it ought not to make us forget that we are men, compounded of the same flesh and blood as they; and for aught we know, God, who made all the nations of the earth, may accept of their various rites and ceremonies, in paying him divine adoration.

We that are the posterity of Ismael, and worship the Eternal after the manner of our fathers, who followed the pattern of Ibrahim the beloved of God, cannot deny but that the law of Moses was of divine original; and yet it contains precepts and injunctions, to which we are wholly strangers in our practice, though the Jews, who are the descendants of Jacob, obey them to this day.

So we believe what the Alcoran says of the Messias, that he is the Breath and Word of God; that he healed diseases, raised the dead, wrought many other miracles, and preached the true heavenly doctrine; yet there is abundance of difference between the ceremonies, which the very apostles used in the service of God, and the worship established by Mahomet, our holy lawgiver; but he tells us that they who live up to the law of Jesus shall go to paradise as well as the mussulmans.

The greatest scandal which the Christians give us is, their setting up pictures and images in their temples, and

the reverence they pay to those insensible pieces of human art; and yet, for aught we know, they may be excusable before God, since they profess openly, in the public decrees of their councils, that the veneration and honour they pay to the figures of saints and angels is only relative, their devotion at the same time resting not on this side the prototypes.

If this be true, I see no more hurt in their worship of images, than in bowing and prostrating before the Alcorān, which is but another sort of imagery representing the divine will.

In a word, if the hieroglyphics of the ancient Egyptians are allowed to be lawful letters, and instruments to express the inward conceptions of the mind, in my opinion, the painting and sculpture which we see in the churches of the Christians, ought not to be condemned as an idolatrous practice, when it is only used as an easier way to convey the history of Jesus, and the rest of the prophets and saints, to the vulgar, who are generally ignorant of letters; unless we shall say, that the Son of Mary was an idol, and the prophets and saints were devils, which God avert from the mouth of a true believer.

Paris, 13th of the 11th Moon, of the Year 1665.

II.—*To WILLIAM VOSPEL, a Recluse of Austria.*

THY dispatch came to my hands in a good hour; I perused with reverence the paternal instructions it contained, the grave and judicious apothegms, the sacred rules and instructions of a regular and spiritual life, the morals more refined than those of Pindar, Epictetus, Seneca, or Cato; but pardon me if I relish not so well

thy panegyric on some of the newly canonised saints, from which you take occasion to extol the pope's infallibility, and to exclude from salvation all that are not within the pale of the Roman church.

I am a Christian and a Catholic as well as you ; I honour the apostles and martyrs, with all the primitive saints, confessors, and holy doctors of the church ; but I can never be persuaded, that a man, for being a murderer, traitor, an inventor of cruel devices, or a learned sycophant, can merit heaven, though he may be ranked in the red lines of the kalendar ; much less can I believe that all men shall be damned who are not in communion with the bishop of Rome. Certainly the catholic or universal church is not shut up within the narrow confines of the shattered Roman empire ; consider Greece, Armenia, Egypt, Muscovy, Ethiopia, and all the spacious territories of Europe, and the East : How many millions daily say the pater-noster, and pray in Jesus's name, yet never paid obedience to any but their own patriarchs and bishops ? Were not all the apostles equally in commission ? Were not the churches they founded and established equally holy and orthodox ? Where then commenced the mighty schism, but in the morose pride of Victor, who (for the sake of paschal niceties) affronted all the churches in the world, and was for that reason severely reprov'd by a French bishop of his own obedience, besides the reprimands of Polycarp and other prelates of the East ? Was not St. John the Beloved, that rested his head with divine honour on the breast of Christ, as privy to the laws of his master as Peter, Paul, or any other abortive apostle ? Remember the first general council at Jerusalem, where James the brother of our Lord sat president, decreeing abstinences exactly opposite to the present Roman faith and practice ; and believe at the same time that

it was imperial vanity and pride which first begot the fatal separation. Hereby was but the bastard of the apostolic canons, cherished and too much countenanced by Constantine and his successors, till the fatal time of Phocas, whose untimely death made all things ripe for the intended usurpation. Oh Guicciardine ! how truly hast thou written the state of modern Rome ! Worthy as Horace of eternal honour ; thy faithful prose equals his courtly verse, and merits new Augustuses to patronise it.

Believe me, Father William, I have no spite or enmity against the Roman high priest ; I reverence him equally with his brethren, the patriarchs of Constantinople, Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch ; I would go beyond this, for the sake of conformity to ancient customs, and in obedience to the celebrated council of Nice, I would willingly acknowledge him the primate of the world ; let him have the first place, in God's name, among the patriarchs of the universal church, but let him not ride on the necks of his equals ; let him not pretend a power to cancel the apostolic canons, reverse the traditions of the fathers, repeal the decrees of general councils, dispense with the laws of nature, grace, reason, morality, and the very institutions of his predecessors, men, without question, as infallible as he. This is not the way to make profelytes to the Roman faith, unless it be of fools and knaves. The world has received new lights, Father William, and men begin to hiss religious bantering off the stage ; nay, even they who are most guilty of it, I mean the Roman courtiers, cardinals, and priests, cannot forbear laughing at the folly and credulous easiness of those on whom they impose their pious frauds ; the bigotted laity are by them esteemed no better than silly asses, tamely couching under the burdens of their ecclesiastical lords and drivers.

Therefore it is time for thee to open thy eyes, lift up thy head, and lay aside monastic simplicity. I do not counsel thee to turn libertine, or imitate the Italian gallantry, which has taught the priests, instead of sacred continence, to squint a benediction on some charming lady from the altar, in the name of *Dominus Vobiscum*, or *Sursum Corda*, even whilst they are preparing for divine revels, to banquet on the flesh and blood of God. Oh! monstrous perfidy, and execrable profaneness! Nor, if thou art affronted and revengeful, would I advise thee to time the execution of thy wrath like the Sicilian vespers, and make the bells become the signals of thy cruelty, which ought, and were designed and consecrated on purpose to drill on careless souls to church, with their dull, sleepy, jangling chimes; and with their more triumphant lusty music on the festivals of saints, to make devoted Christians dream they are going to heaven, instead of a massacre. I would not have thee hope to merit paradise by sending thither, in obedience to the pope or general of thy order, the majestic souls of kings or emperors, in vehicles of sacred poison or envenomed eucharists. Believe that those prelates, priests, or monks, who are thus divinely profane and mercifully cruel, shall become mired, vested, cowed monsters, in the fiercest and most violently glowing dens of hell, there with the most exalted arsenics, mercuries, and whatsoever gives the highest pains, to languish, pine, and rack away ten thousand thousand thousand ages, in penances of slow effect, which expiate, but very late, the crying sins of guilty murderers and bloody hypocrites.

Yet such as these, since modern times, are the only men thought worthy to be canonized for saints, which made a certain honest cardinal cry out in the presence of

the pope, "These new saints force me to doubt the old ones."

Father William, the same thought begins and ends my letter: Your's was upon the stretch, extolling far too high the largeness of the Roman church, the infallible power of popes, the miracles of these new saints; and I, for my part, am a man abhorring bigotry; I cannot believe things contrary to my reason: I wish the differences of mankind in point of religion were rationally composed; and that the good of all sects, factions, parties, churches; and communions, were united in this life, as they surely will be in the next.

In the mean time, to the Father without Beginning; to the Son without a Younger Brother; to the Holy Ghost, the First and the Last; to the Virgin Mary, the mother of the Entire Deity, I recommend thee and all good Christians, hoping to see you in heaven, though we cannot it seems think alike on earth.

Paris, 1st of the 12th Moon, of the Year 1665.

III.—To NATHAN BEN SADDI, a Jew at Vienna.

ACCORDING to thy desire, I have procured and sent thee the Alcoran and other writings of our holy doctors, books which will conduct thee into the right way. Thou wilt find in these volumes a spirit of life and power; there breathes in them a certain vital principle of reason, so that whosoever reads them attentively, may feel (if I may so speak) the very pulse of intellectual wisdom beating in every sentence.

There is a vast difference between these writings, full of arguments clear and intelligible, and the whimsies of

thy rabbis, who abound in sacred fables and divine romances.

Who can peruse your celebrated *Mishnah* without disdain? or look into your more applauded *Talmud*, and not feel himself touched with horror at the monstrous blasphemies and ridiculous forgeries therein contained? Dost thou not laugh at the story of God's pickling up the leviathan till the days of the Messiah, and that other of the bull which daily devours the fodder of a thousand mountains? or wilt thou show me the nest of that bird, from whence, the *Talmud* says, an egg falling on the earth, threw down three thousand tall cedars with its weight, and at length breaking, overflowed sixty villages with the liquid substance included in the shell?

Such as these must needs be fit themes for the contemplations of the Omnipotent! and yet your rabbis teach, that God studies nine hours in the day, in the *Talmud*. Can any man of common piety bear these blasphemies, and not tremble? What affronts are these to human sense? what impositions on the reason of the credulous Jews? Does the most perfect of all beings acquire knowledge by degrees? or is the Eternal Intellect improved by reading of books? or if it were so, would he not make a better choice than of a volume which, in the incredible stories it relates, exceeds all the figments of the poets.

Tell me, Nathan, canst thou swallow that loud lie of the *Talmud*, which tells thee that there was a lion, who when he roared at the distance of four hundred miles from Rome, all the women that were with child in that city, being affrighted at the noise, miscarried, and the walls of Rome fell down? and when he drew nearer by an hundred miles, he set up his throat again, which made so terrible a sound, that all the Romans teeth fell out of

their heads, and the emperor himself felt such convulsions as had well nigh cost him his life.

Surely the crow which the Talmud speaks of in another place, was but a puny to this monstrous lion, and yet it seems that crow swallowed a serpent that had eaten a frog as big as a village of threescore houses, and when he had done, flew into the next tree. I suppose that was the tree which grew in paradise, and was five hundred miles high, according to the Talmud. Have I not reason for this raillery, when one of your rabbis solemnly swears he was an eye-witness of these things? Who can forbear to ridicule the bigotry of those who give up their faith to such delusions?

Thou wilt meet with more rational entertainment in the books of the mussulman doctors, more especially in that transcript thou hast of the volume first dictated in heaven; that confirms the true law of Moses, but damns the impostures of the Talmud, attributing this invention of such errors to the devil.

But thou wilt ask me, perhaps, what I mean by the true law of Moses? Shall I tell thee the opinion of one of thy own nation; a Hebrew of the Hebrews, as he pretends, and, for aught I know, of the same tribe with thyself; for I am a stranger to the genealogies of you both.

Some years ago, here was in this city a man who, if we may believe him, has been in all the cities of the world; the French call him The Wandering Jew, and he confirmed that title by the profession he made of his birth, descent, and universal travels. No doubt but thou hast heard of this man, or at least of such a character, and therefore I need not repeat what he said of himself, and what the generality of mankind believe of him; suffice it to tell thee, that I was once in his company half a day together, when, among other discourses, he told

me that the true law of Moses has been lost for above these two thousand years, except in the north parts of Asia, where there are an infinite number of Hebrews, but far different in their religion from all the Jews in the rest of the world. He says the country where they inhabit is environed round with high and inaccessible mountains. I asked him the exact geographical situation of this country, but received no other answer than that it lay beyond the river Sabbathan. Then I remembered what I had read in Esdras, a scribe of thy nation, concerning the transmigration of the ten tribes who were carried away captives by the Assyrians, how they passed through a certain river on dry ground, the waters being divided to the right hand and to the left, and that after the same manner they should return again in the latter days, but that in the mean time the region where they live was hidden from all other mortals.

Comparing this passage with what I had heard from the Wandering Jew, I became almost persuaded that the people and country of which he spoke were the very same mentioned by Esdras. God only can discern the truth from error in histories of so remote and ancient a subject.

As to their religion, I was just going to give thee an account of what he said concerning it, but am interrupted by company, wherefore I am forced to break off abruptly; expect a full relation in my next. I am in haste.

Paris, 4th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1666.

IV.—*To the same.*

THE interruption which made me so suddenly conclude my other letter lasted not long, so that I have time enough to perform my promise by the same post.

I was about to relate what the Wandering Jew told me of the religion of those remote Hebrews in Asia, which take as follows :

He says they are a nation of philosophers, bound by their laws to study the liberal arts and sciences ; they have none but iron money current among them, the use of gold and silver coins being expressly forbidden by their laws, to prevent the temptations of avarice and theft : For who would steal or covet a metal, which for its bulk was not easy to be hid, nor for its beauty very desirable, being every where common in the veins of the earth, and served only as a method of barter and commerce among themselves, where the inequality of merchandises entangled their traffic, and would not admit of a ready exchange ?

This took from them the occasion of many unnecessary arts at home, and they had no temptations to travel abroad, the chief design of their lawgiver being to oblige them to spend most of their time in religious and philosophical exercises, and the rest in preparing necessaries for human sustenance : They had no need to buy any thing of foreign countries, or to build ships for that end, who were bound to live content with the natural product of their own fertile country ; for luxury has not as yet set footing in that happy region, if we may believe this traveller. He says they feed altogether on the fruits of the earth, not admitting any art or employment which tends to superfluity, but only such as serve the necessary uses of life, wherein they show an admirable dexterity and skill.

When they travel from one town to another, which is very frequent, they never carry any thing to defray their charges by the way, or when they arrive at their jour-

ney's end, all entertainment of this nature being free and reciprocal ; such is the custom of the country.

They have no lawyers among them, but if any contention arise, it is presently determined by the arbitration of the next neighbour, to whose sentence all submit, every man being willing to lose something of his right, rather than disturb the public amity and peace.

As to the manner of their worship, they are strict observers of purity in washing, anointing, and shaving their bodies.

They have temples also, where they assemble every seventh day, and having offered up the first-fruits of the earth, they sit down in the courts and banquet together with joy, whilst the priests entertain them with excellent music and songs in praise of God and his works. To this end the courts of their temples are made very large, that they may contain so many distinct families ; and stately pavilions are set up, adorned with the boughs of green trees, with all manner of flowers carelessly intermixed. But amidst all their feasting they are not permitted to taste of flesh ; they eat only the fruits of the earth, with milk, honey, and oil ; and their common drink is water and wine.

At the age of sixteen years, every man is bound to take the following oath :

“ I swear that I will adore but one God, who brought our fathers out of Egypt, and has conducted us by a mysterious path to this land of promise ; I will religiously serve him all my life, for that he has vouchsafed to plant me in the family of his elect, and not in either of the two tribes who were left behind in the land of delusions ; I will do justly to all men, neither will I voluntarily hurt or kill any living creature, unless it be in my own defence ; I will not taste of the flesh of any animal,

but in all things observe the abstinence commanded by Alla to Moses on the mount ; I will religiously obey my prince to my last breath, and rather be torn to pieces by wild beasts, than betray him, or consent to betray him to another, for he is the viceroy of God ; I will never conceal my knowledge of any conspiracy against him or my country, neither will I discover his secrets to any, if it should ever be my honour to know them ; I will observe the traditions of my fathers, and teach the same and no other to my posterity ; in fine, I will in all things obey the laws of this sacred kingdom, this region of peace, this garden of bliss. All this I solemnly swear by the First Father of Light, and by Nothing, the profound womb of darkness, and by Silence, the companion of that Depth which no created being can fathom ; which is the same as if I should wish myself annihilated, if I violate this oath in the least point."

These are all the terms of the oath that I can distinctly remember, which I here insert, to show thee what opinion these people have of the law which was given to Moses on the mount ; and they reject the two tribes that were left in Palestine, and esteemed of that country but as the land of delusion, accounting their own country the region of promise, and themselves the elect of God.

One would think that these were the posterity of the ten tribes that were carried away captives by Salmanassar King of Assyria ; and this was also the opinion of that wanderer, who told me that both their Pentateuch was different from yours, and the language wherein it is written ; for he said it was rather a dialect of Arabic, in which language thou knowest God wrote the ten commandments on the two tables, among which one is, "Thou shalt not kill." This prohibition, they say, extends to all living creatures, though your doctors inter-

pret it as only reaching to men, and so do the Christians. But the mussulmans interpret it thus, "Thou shalt neither kill man nor beast without reason;" by which clause the beasts are privileged from the wanton cruelty of men, who otherwise would murder them only to make sport; yet wicked men are not exempted from a violent death, as a punishment of their crimes.

This traveller says also that the people of that country are so healthy that they generally live till they are an hundred-and-twenty years old, which is almost twice the age of other mortals. This he ascribes to their exquisite temperance and moderation in all things, as also to the dryness of the soil, and to the force of certain winds, which continually sweep the air of this delectable region, and purge it of all hurtful qualities.

If it ever be thy fortune to see this person, he will acquaint thee with a great many more delightful passages, which it would be too tedious for me to insert in a letter; besides, my memory is treacherous, and I often forget those things at one time which I remember at another; but if thou art solicitous to hear more, I will oblige thee with all that I can call to mind of this traveller in another letter.

In the mean-time, make a right use of these hints, and weigh one thing with another; examine all things without prejudice or partiality; trust no man's reason but thy own, in matters of a disputable nature, since thou hast as much right to decide the controversy as any man; and thus thou wilt never become a bankrupt in religion.

Paris, 4th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1666.

V.—To MOHAMMED, HADGI, DERVICH, *Eremit of Mount Uriel in Arabia the Happy.*

As I think, this is the last of my hours in this world, and the first of a new life which I shall commence in immortality: I perceive that the fatal period, the moment of transmigration set by destiny is approaching: The crisis of my blood is dissolving apace; my spirit hastens to get loose from these mortal chains; I feel my soul trying and stretching her wings, preparing to take her eternal flight to the region assigned her by God and nature.

I have not presumption enough to hope for paradise, nor am I so abandoned to despair as to conclude I shall go to hell; I rather believe Aaraf, or the place of prisons, will be my portion, in regard I fear the evils which I have been guilty of are not overbalanced by my good actions; it is well if virtue has counterpoised vice in the course of this mortal life. However, I am resigned, and commit myself to the Indulgent Creator of all things, who will not fail to dispose of me according to the order which he has established in the universe.

Methinks, were I even in hell, I could not forbear praising that Fountain of all things; I would teach the devils and damned a new lesson of patience and contentedness, of humility and devotion, of generosity and love, amidst their tremendous torments; I would survey, with an indifference becoming a true believer, the horrid abyss, with all its dreadful vaults and apartments; I would consider the wonderful architecture of those infernal prisons, the inexpugnable strength of the walls, their prodigious thickness and unmoveable fastness; I would contemplate every thing with the reason of a philosopher, and the pi-

ety of a Mussulman, not giving myself up to the passions of a fool and an infidel.

All this I imagine were easy to perform in those fatal caverns, and much more; but God knows how the experience of such an intolerable anguish and restraint might alter a man's mind.

However, I find it medicinal to think of the last and worst things, to be always prepared for death, and whatsoever shall follow it; for surprisings are apt to unman us, and plunder us of our reason. I was in the height of a violent fever when I began this letter, yet now it is abated, and I palpably feel the gentle return of health and life; this is owing, in my judgment, to the real belief I had, that my last hour was come, which I have so long expected; and I could almost persuade myself, that I shall disperse a thousand maladies, recover out of the most dangerous paroxysms, and prolong my days to old age, by the mere force of these contemplations.

My faith in this point is grounded on experience; for I have often found, that to be armed against calamities, with an even mind, is either a sure way to avoid them, or at least to protract the season of their arrival; and if there were nothing else in it, but the rendering them more easy when they come, it were worth any man's pains to try the experiment.

Doubtless there is no terror in death, but what the vain opinion of men creates; it is as pleasant for a thinking man to die as to live, if it be only for this reason, that in his passage from the life he had led before, he shall not have bare naked ideas for his contemplation, but matter of fact, and the most important that ever employed the souls of men.

O admirable sylvan! consider with thyself, whether it will not be highly grateful to thy languishing soul,

when thou shalt perceive demonstratively, by the infallible enthymemas of thy trembling pulse, that thou art just ready to be released from the deceitful sophistry of human life! that thou art near escaping from a narrow cage, to be upon the wing at large, to fly into the ample fields of beauty, light, and endless happiness! Reflect also at the same time, O holy eremit, that I should think it no pain to be freed from my confinement to a stinking nest of infidels.

But why should I give them that reproachful epithet, when, for aught I know, I am a greater infidel myself? It is true, indeed, I am of the lineage of Ibrahim, Isaac, and the holy race; I bear in my body the seals of a divine league or covenant between God and man; I was circumcised in due time, and gave supreme glory to one God, and honour to Mahomet his messenger; I pronounced the seven mysterious words, whose sound excites the harmony of the spheres, sets the angels dancing, puts all nature into motions, and makes the devil as deaf as a beetle; nay, as our holy doctors teach, the very breath with which that sacred confession is uttered, blows the ashes of hell into the eyes of the damned, and strikes them blind; in a word, I have fasted, prayed, given alms, and performed all the external duties of a true believer; yet I have reason to fear, that the best of my pious actions are not sufficient to cancel my sins; my practice runs counter to my faith; there seems to be a double spirit in me, one inclining me to good, and the other forcing me to evil; for whilst I really in my heart believe the alcoran, and obey Mahomet our holy lawgiver, I am compelled to deny both, to profess the life and manners of a Nazarene, to counterfeit an infidel, and do a thousand other ill things, to please the Grand Signior and his slaves. Thus I play fast and

loose with God Almighty, and turn religion into cross-purposes; yet Heaven knows that I obtest all the elements to witness, that I would fain be innocent, and live in unblemished virtue; but the fatal necessities I lie under constrain me to a perpetual course of vice, which makes me sometimes cry out in the agonies of my soul, "O God! I pray thee either to alter my circumstances, and reform my nature, or make new laws more easy to be kept."

Venerable and patient solitary, bear with my importunate complaints, and remember, that though thou art as an angel for thy perfections, yet Mahmut is but a man, subject to a thousand frailties. Pity him, and continue to afford him thy sage counsel; rest also assured, that amongst all his infirmities he still retains an inviolable affection and dutiful regard to the tenets of God's prophet.

Paris, 22d of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1666.

VI.—To the KAIMACHAM.

THOU mayest report it to the divan for a certainty, that Mirammud, the son of the xeriph at Saltee, is taken prisoner by the French. That bold youth has long roved the seas uncontrouled, has done many injuries to the Christians, filled Saltee with slaves; now he himself is become a captive. Such is the fortune of war by sea and land, to-day triumphant and victorious, to-morrow vanquished and in chains.

Yet he lost not his honour with his liberty, having bravely defended his vessel, and strewed the decks with slaughtered French, till overpowered with numbers he was compelled to yield. His enemies extol his courage,

and the greatness of his mind, which would not sink under the pressure of this misfortune; he seemed to have the command of himself (which is the most glorious victory), and suffered not his free-born soul to be led captive by his passions, but behaved himself with such an even temper, as placed him above the pity of his enemies, and rather made him the subject of their emulation. He is brought to the court, where he is entertained as a guest, rather than as a prisoner, being invited to their banquets, masks, plays, and other diversions; neither is he debarred the privilege of hunting, which might give him the fairest opportunity to escape; but he is ignorant of the language of this country, and few of the French understand Moreſco, so that it is almost impossible for him to make a party, or consult his flight, unless the king's interpreter should assist him; besides, the French have a higher opinion of his generosity, than to apprehend such an ungrateful return of the royal usage he finds in this court.

As for Mahmut, he has not yet made himself known to this brave captive; but if the ministers of the Sublime Porte shall think it the interest or honour of the Sublime Porte to engage in this affair, I want but a commission to set Mirammud safe ashore in Afric.

I will not hazard any thing in an affair of this importance, without an order from my superiors. When their pleasure is once known, the execution shall be swift. I wait for thy commands, as for a decree of destiny, which cannot be repealed.

The God of our fathers, who multiplied the seed of Ismael as the grass of the field, and gave them the sovereignty over many nations, grant, that the Sublime Porte, which is the nursery of the faithful, may always

take such measures as shall advance the interest of the mussulman empire.

Paris, 14th of the 3d Moon, of the Year 1666.

VII.—To HAMEL MULADDIN, *Xeriph of Sallee.*

THY son is no longer a captive, but a conqueror; his first appearance before the ladies of this court was an equivalent to his ransom; he is like to do thee greater service by his chains than when he ranged the seas; his beauty may do more mischief in France than all thy ships of war, since it has already created such rivalships and factions among the fair sex as engages the French gallants on many unhappy rencounters; and in a little time it will be difficult for the interested sparks to meet and part with unsheathed swords. Libels and panegyrics divide the studies of the wits; while one flatters, another lampoons the amorous females; and Mirammud, the illustrious slave, is all the talk. In a word, he finds royal usage, having the liberty of the court; and all are pleased with his graceful deportment and undisguised conversation; every one affects his company, and he has the fate of princes, never to be alone. His skill in riding and throwing the lance has inflamed the noble youth with martial emulations; they esteem Mirammud the most accomplished person of this age.

Canst thou now repine at thy son's glorious thralldom? a captivity that loads him with so many honours? that lays his conquerors at his feet, and subdues all hearts to his matchless perfections? His followers find friendship among the infidels for his sake: It were to be wished that equal humanity were shown to the Christian slaves in Barbary. I tell thee thy son is so admired and loved,

fake of discourse; for these fellows are soft as the air in their address and conversation; they appear as innocent as Santones, sincere as Hadgis, loyal and courtly as the pages of the Seraglio; they would wheedle ninety-nine of Argus's eyes out of his head successively before he missed one.

They came first to Paris as merchants, and no doubt but Solyman had given them instructions how to insinuate into Eliachim's acquaintance, and so by degrees into mine; for that honest Jew trades with people of all nations and characters.

However it be, I remember the very words which thou insertest in thy letter were spoken by me in company with these infidels; but I shall find a way to be even with them, and Solyman too, before they dream of it.

In the mean time, I pray heartily, that if ever it shall be thy misfortune to be in the like peril, destiny or chance, providence or fate, may raise some friend to give thee a caution, and that thou mayest not, with the unhappy Cæsar, neglect to read it in time.

I am now going to encounter these giasres; perhaps I shall catch them in their own snares; if not, I will secure they shall not catch me.

Dear Pesteli, may thy soul repose under the protection of God.

Paris, 1st of the 5th Moon, of the Year 1666.

IX.—To DGNET OGLOU.

To whom should I complain in my adversity but to my friend? I have been more embarrassed within these two moons, than through all the former course of my life;

troubles of divers kinds throng in upon me; I seem like a but or mark, whereat every species of misfortune, like a skilful archer, directs the fatal arrows of its malice; I am near overwhelmed with calamities; heaven and earth are set against me, and all the elements conspire my ruin; yet no persecution appears so terrible as that of man, nor any affliction so poignant as that which proceeds from the ingratitude and perfidy of my own countrymen, persons related to me by blood.

Age and much sickness have confined me to my bed for a considerable time, which is no small alloy to human happiness; but to render me perfectly miserable, the ministers of the Porte are angry with me for being old and infirm, and for not continuing to serve the Grand Signior with the same vigour and strength as formerly; else what mean the frequent reproaches they send me, whilst I am not in a condition to answer them, or make an apology for myself? Would they have me immortal, and proof against the strokes of destiny and death, which thou knowest are unavoidable? Whilst I was in my prime, healthy and strong as an eagle, they encouraged me with the fairest promises in the world, telling me I should never want for money, or the protection of the Grand Signior; yet even then I received not my pension without murmurs and obscure menaces; so hard a thing it is for courtiers to be touched with any man's necessities. But now they threaten plainly to stop all farther supplies, unless I will grow young again, and do business as briskly as when I had numbered but thirty summers. Thus they serve poor Mahmut, as we use oranges and lemons, whose vital spirit when we have sucked out, we throw the rest away as unprofitable. Yet not one of them will contribute in the least to my recovery; only the generous Cara Hali, our beloved friend, hearing of my ma-

lady, sent me a strange chemical liquor, with the celebrated confecti^on El Razi, some bezoar, and the most precious balm of Gilead, all prepared to my hand, with directions, and sealed with an authentic signet.

These indeed had a marvellous operation on me. I tried them but yesterday, and find myself suddenly restored to some degrees of health as by a miracle. Whether it be the vast esteem I have for that excellent physician, with the confidence I repose in his skill and judgment, has had some influence on me, or what else, I know not; yet we used to observe, that the patient's good opinion of his physician is half a cure: However, those sovereign medicines have inspired me with a new energy; and had I not other afflictions to break my heart, I could almost promise myself to reach the age of Nestor; but my unfortunate stars will have it otherwise, and I am resigned to destiny.

Thou knowest my cousin Solyman, the turban-maker, and art no stranger to his humours and fortune; what an unsettled man he has been in the whole course of his life; that no employment could ever please him, nor he be long fixed in any place; how he has rambled from Constantinople to Scutari, from thence to Chalcedon, &c. always murmuring against Heaven, and complaining of his hard fate, in that he was not bred a courtier, a student, a soldier, or any thing but what he really is. Thou art acquainted also with some of his religious caprices, how he is addicted to doing the book, making the triple knot, and to a thousand other foolish superstitions; by which, whilst he aspires at the character of a sage, or a cunning man, he renders himself more contemptible than an idiot, forfeiting the esteem of all wise and good men, for the sake of a little fame, and noisy character among the empty, giddy multitude.

But after all, I believe thou art wholly a stranger to his secret malice, and the rancour with which he persecuted me, his poor exiled uncle. I myself was deceived by the subtle apology he made some years ago, for the slander his tongue had uttered, when he transferred all the guilt of that injury on Shashim Itham, the black eunuch, and Ichingi Cap-Oglani, master of the pages; but now I am convinced he is a traitor, a villain, and a fellow void of faith and honesty.

I received a letter from him within these seven days, full of tender and insinuating expressions, thanking me for all the good offices I had done him, and for my reasonable counsel in several cases; professing also at the same time an inviolable friendship, and that he would make it his study to do me some effectual service; yet the next post brought me a dispatch from my brother Pesteli Hali, wherein he bids me beware of Solyman, assuring me that he had good reason to suspect that cousin of mine had some ill design upon me. This is certain, says my brother, Solyman boasts of his familiars, not without some insult, that there is not a word or action escapes his uncle Mahmut at Paris, but he is soon informed of it at Constantinople; and that which confirms me in the same jealousy with Pesteli is, that he inserts in his letter to me some passages and discourses verbatim, which I must needs own to have been between me and Eliachim the Jew, with two or three Armenian merchants, in our most private meetings at Eliachim's house or my chamber. These he learned from some of Solyman's most intimate companions.

What can I make of all this, but that these Armenians are of Solyman's council, his privados, his chronoes, &c. whom, having business of their own at Paris, that perfidious wretch has engaged to pry into my secrets,

to give him a constant account of what discoveries they make, and, if possible, to trepan me into some irrecoverable error in my conduct, that so he may finally ruin me ?

O Mahomet ! what is become of the reverence due to thy sacred name, to thy law, and to the book penned in Heaven ? where is the mussulman faith and integrity ? the religious fastness of friendship, with which our fathers propped up one another in the service of God, and the empire of true believers ? But there is no need of exclaiming against faith and piety on this account ; human nature itself is responsible for the baseness and ingratitude of my kinsman ; he no longer deserves the character of a man ; I advise thee to shun his company as a pest, a walking contagion among mortals.

In a word, dear Dgnet, let not thou and I suffer ourselves to be carried away by a vain pity or tenderness for any man, though he be the son of a mother's sister, since there is no trust in flesh and blood ; but let us learn the maxims of French wisdom, which teach men to lay the foundation of their own happiness in smiling at the misfortunes of others.

Paris, 14th of the 6th Moon, of the Year 1666.

X.—*To HAMET, Reis Effendi, Principal Secretary of the Ottoman empire.*

BESIDES the general characters of countries, and the people inhabiting there, it is necessary for thee to be informed of particular emergencies, and such events as deserve a place in the eternal records of the Ottoman monarchy, the fifth and last in the world, that so the ministers of the august divan, the destined arbitrators of the

universe, judges of all human affairs, and counsellors of the great Sultan, may in the sacred code, as in a mirror, behold whatever happens in the distant climates worthy of remark.

After the salutations, therefore, proceeding from profound humility, entire respect, and perfect friendship, know, that a devouring pestilence has lately made a fatal decimation in the English territories, especially in London, the capital city of that island, where above an hundred thousand souls, struck with invisible darts from God; went off the stage of human life in less than six moons revolution.

The dire contagion by degrees spread farther through the adjacent provinces, and reached the most remote and solitary corners of the land; death set his standard up, proclaiming open war against the inhabitants; with flying troops of mortal plagues he ravaged over the isle, filling all parts with doleful cries and lamentations; the cemeteries were not large enough to hold the carcases of such as fell before the dreadful conqueror; but open fields were turned to sepulchres, and crammed with spoils of human race; an universal desolation reigned; death celebrated cruel triumphs every where.

Such as pretend to astrology and hidden sciences, will have this to be an effect of the late comet which appeared at the end of the year 1664, whilst others attribute it to nearer natural causes; and some conclude it is a judgment sent from Heaven on that rebellious people, who a few years before had involved the nation in a civil war, and barbarously massacred their king. God only knows the truth that is concealed from man.

Thou mayest register also, that the Queen-mother of France is newly dead, and the crook-backed Prince of Conti; on which account this court is now in mourning.

and the churches hung with black, whilst melancholy bells perpetually invite the living to pray for the deceased royal souls, and deep-bass'd organ-pipes breathe out incessant doleful aspirations, sounding like inarticulate prayers, and funeral sighs for the departed. In this the Nazarenes approach near to the faith of true believers; they give alms also, as we do, and settle stipends on certain priests and dervises, to mumble over daily masses for the dead, which is an evident sign that they have hopes of immortality, and look for the resurrection. Doubtless there is something good at the bottom of all religions, though it be overlaid with errors and corruptions.

God direct us through the meanders which human frailty involves us in, and grant every Mussulman a particular chart and compass, whereby to steer his course through the uncertain tracks of mortal life, that he may at last arrive in paradise; for we shall never find the way thither by general rules.

Illustrious Hamet, I pray that thou and I may at a destined hour encounter one another in the walks of Eden, there to converse under immortal shades, near to some warbling stream of matchless wine or water, to resolve our past fatigues on earth, and to caress ourselves in the security of endless bliss.

Paris, 15th of the 7th Moon, of the Year 1666.

XI.—*To NATHAN BEN SADDI, a Jew at Vienna.*

THOU and thy feigned Messias be damned together for company! Must I be baulked of my money for the sake of your new superstition? How many Messiaeses have ye had; five-and-twenty at least, besides the son of Mary,

who is acknowledged and blessed for ever? Must all the world be bubbled to eternity by the fables of your nation? Curse upon your rabbis and cochams, those pimps to the more religious debaucheries of mortals. Nathan, I took thee for another manner of man; however, if thou art a sworn servant to Sabbati Sevi, the new sham king of the Jews, I have nothing to say to it; do as thou wilt; but I dare be a prophet, so far as to tell thee thou wilt be cursedly left in the lurch, with the rest of the fools, thy bigotted brethren. Let what will be, it behoves thee as an honest man to transmit the bills that are entrusted to thee. Whether Sabbati Sevi, Ben Joseph, or Ben David, be the name of your expected Messiah, I would not have Ben Saddi degenerate. Continue thou faithful, and the few others that are entrusted with the sublime affairs, and let all the rest of the common Jews go to Gehenna, or to the Vale of Tophet, which you please; but I would fain have thee in the number of the righteous who shall possess paradise. Some of thy letters have encouraged me to hope for this, but thy last makes me almost despair of seeing thee happy either in this world or the next; for thou writest like one in a phrenzy, raving on chimeras of strange honour, glory, and power, which thou shalt shortly enjoy in the kingdom of thy fantastic Messiah; thou art already a prince in thy own conceit.

For God's sake, Nathan, wean thyself from these religious fondnesses; awaken thy reason, which is the distinguishing character of a man; examine the grounds of this new delusion; search into the birth and origin of Sabbati Sevi, and thou wilt find him to descend of an obscure and base parentage, his father being but a kind of mongrel Jew, and by profession an usurer, which is forbid by the written law of Moses, and in the great Al-

coras it is accounted execrable ; his mother, a woman of the Curds, suspected for a witch, in regard most of that infidel nation practise magic arts, and diabolical charms ; and it is not altogether improbable that your counterfeit Messias was educated privately by her in the same studies, whence he learned the methods of enchantments and illusions, to deceive the senses, and impose on the reason of mankind.

I can tell thee of a truth, that there are more eyes on him and his actions than he is aware of ; and I myself, at this distance, have received a particular relation of his life, from such as knew him a youth at Smyrna, the place of his nativity : He is accused of many vices and extravagancies during his early years ; his conversation was wild and dissolute, being a noted inamorato or stallion over all that city ; for which, and some other crimes, he was expelled the synagogue, and banished from Smyrna, by the mutual consent of the mussulman cadı and your own rulers ; he was also excommunicated by the rabbis as an heretic, for broaching certain doctrines repugnant to your law, and the general faith of the Jews ; all which cannot but be prevailing recommendations of him to the office of Messias, or king of Israel.

From thence he rambled up and down the Morea, and other provinces of Greece, leaving a memorial of infamy wherever he set his foot, continually marrying and divorcing of wives, debauching of virgins, and frequenting the company of harlots, till those countries grew weary of him, and threatened to chastise his wickedness. Then he passed over into Syria and Palestine, beginning to set up for a reformer of your law, and at Jerusalem openly professing himself to be the Messias, whereby he drew a rabble of lunatics and frantic people after him ; but as for

the seniors and governors, they have rejected him as an impostor.

Consider, Nathan, the fate that befel Ben Cochab, as he called himself, that is the Son of a Star, who pretended to be the Messias, in the days of Adrian, Emperor of the Romans; reflect on the calamities which overwhelmed him and his followers, to the number of four hundred thousand Jews, who all fell, with their false prophet, sacrifices to the just revenge and fury of that incensed monarch; for they had impudently boasted, that by such a prefixed time he should be taken captive, and deposed from his throne by the Messias, who should assume the imperial dignity, and all the world should obey him; but when those who survived the slaughter of their brethren reflected on the author of so tragical a catastrophe, they changed his name in contempt and hatred, calling him no longer Ben Cochab, the Son of a Star, but Bar Cuziba, the Son of a Lie, a false prophet, and seducer of the brethren.

Thou hast all the reason in the world to have no better opinion of Sabbati Sevi, since he is rejected by the wiser sort of Jews, and has not performed one miracle in confirmation of his pretended Messias-ship; neither has any uncommon or preternatural appearance happened before or since he assumed this dignity; whereas all your rabbis teach, that no less than ten eminent and remarkable prodigies shall precede the coming of your Messias; and I remember thou thyself, about ten years ago, sentest me a letter much to the same effect, telling me that certain monstrous sorts of men should come from the ends of the earth, whose eyes shall be as venomous as basilisks; with a great many other stories of like nature.

Hast thou forgot this, Nathan, or art thou so far infatuated with the bold impostures of this impudent decei-

er, as for his sake to deny thy former faith, reverse thy own sentiments, and disannul the traditions of thy doctors? For shame! rouse up thy intellectual faculties, and suffer not thy reason to be lulled asleep by the prestigious umbrages and charms of a lewd vagrant, a wizard, a cheat.

Have but patience, at least, till thou see those signs accomplished which are to usher in your Messias, before thou give up thyself to so dangerous a credulity; let the sun first emit those pestilential vapours, which shall kill a million of the Kophrim, or infidels, every day, as your traditions threaten; let that luminary be also totally eclipsed for the space of thirty days; in a word, let all the other prodigies come to pass which thou thyself didst once so passionately believe; and then I promise thee, on the word of a musselman, that I will be thy proselyte, and embrace thy law, and adore thy Messias, on condition that otherwise thou wilt be my convert, believe the alcoran, and obey the messenger of God, the last and seal of the prophets.

Paris, 11th of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1666.

XII.—To the KAIMACHAM.

I AM afraid the divan will be obliged to send another agent to Vienna, to supply the place of Nathan Ben Sadi, who is running mad after the new Messias of the Jews. There is no doubt but thou and the other happy ministers residing at the august Porte have heard of a certain impostor at Smyrna, by name Sabbati-Sevi, of Hebrew race, who calls himself The only begotten Son of God, Messias, and Redeemer of Israel, and what multitudes of boasting, credulous Jews he draws after him, so

that there is a schism broke out between them, and they are divided into two contrary factions both in Smyrna and all over the Levant. It is impossible that these things should be concealed from the resplendent seat of fame, since they have reached even our ears who dwell at this distance; nay, there is hardly a province or city in all the West which has not received intelligence of so remarkable a novelty.

I have received a dispatch from Zeidi Alamanzi at Venice, wherein he informs me that all the Jews of Italy are preparing to visit the Holy Land, and to see the face of their long-expected Messias, who they now believe is really come on earth, and is that Sabbati Sevi at Smyrna; they are settling their affairs as fast as they can, acquitting themselves from all worldly engagements; and those who are devout give themselves up to prayer and mortifications, whilst others spend their time in feasting, dancing, and all manner of mirth. He says some of them will sit or stand up to the nose in water for four-and-twenty hours together; and this they do in imitation of Adam's penance, according to their tradition; for they are taught that the first father of mortals, after he was banished from paradise, as a punishment for his sin, stood an hundred and thirty years together in water thus reaching to his nostrils.

Others of these superstitious people will sit naked many hours together on a heap of pismires, till they are almost stung to death; a third sort dig their own graves, and going down into them, cause themselves to be covered all over with earth, except only their faces; and in this condition they will lie till they are almost famished.

In the mean while, they send circular letters from all parts, congratulating each other's approaching happiness and deliverance from the oppression of the Göttilas, for

fo they term all that are not of their own nation ; and in thefe mutual addreffes they fail: not to prophecy, that their Meffias fhall, in fuch a moon, go to the great tyrant, king of the Ifmaelites, and lord of all the children of Moab and Edom, (fo they blafpheme our glorious Sultan) ; that he fhall depofe him from his throne, and lead him away captive ; after which he fhall have the dominions of the whole earth laid at his feet.

With fuch kind of wild ftuff do thefe deluded people flatter one another and themfelves, as if in a little time they were to be lords of all things ; fo that no trading or commerce goes forward among them ; an univerfal flop is put to all bufinefs, it being efteemed an inexpiable fin to follow their trades in the days of the Meffias, who is to enrich them with the wealth of all nations.

Strange rumours are fpread abroad of the return of the ten tribes over the river Sabbathon, who were carried away captives by Salmanaffar King of Affyria, and never were heard of fince, till they now difcourfe of their being entamped in the defart of Mount Sinai, in their march to the Holy Land. It is reported alfo, that a mighty fleet of fhips were feen at fea, whofe fails were of fatten, and their ftreamers bore the figure of a lion, with this infcription: “ The Lion of the tribe of Judah.”

The Christians feem aftonifhed at thefe things, yet fome look on them only as dreams. As for honeft Elia-chim here, he is no more moved at thefe things than I ; only he laughs at the folly of the credulous world, and curses the Jews for bringing fuch contempt on themfelves and their pofterity. But Nathan is like one hag-ridden, or defiled by the lamie of the night ; he has loft all reafon, and it will be no lefs than a miracle that muft reftore it again.

Sage minifter, whilt thefe execrable people thus lofe

themselves for the sake of their counterfeit Messias, let us continue to honour the true one, even Jesus the son of Mary, who is now in paradise, and our holy prophet with him.

Paris, 21st of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1666.

XIII.—To MURAT, *Bassa*.

THIS has been a considerable year of actions and events. At the beginning of it I sent to the Porte an account of the death of the Queen-mother of France, and of the Prince of Conti; now I will farther inform thee of a war that is broke out between this crown and that of England. The occasion of it was this: The English and the Hollanders trafficking in America, had had some misunderstandings and feuds about the limits of their several conquests in those remote parts of the world; the Hollanders being the strongest, did many injuries to their neighbours the English, and domineered over them as their lords; the English resenting this very heinously, and grown weary of their oppressions, sent complaints to their king; he, to redress his subjects, ordered his resident at the Hague to demand satisfaction of the States; they refused to do him that justice; upon which he was resolved to have recourse to his arms, and accordingly proclaimed war against Holland, making all necessary preparations to carry it on. The same did his adversaries. The French king, in the mean time, was obliged by a treaty with the Hollanders, concluded in the year 1662, to espouse their quarrels; yet, that he might not break with England rashly, he first sent an ambassador to that court to mediate a peace; but that proving ineffectual, he proclaimed war against that nation, and commanded

the English ambassador to depart his kingdom: The Duke of Beaufort, who is admiral at sea, was ordered to equip a gallant fleet, and join the Dutch navy, which he performed with all imaginable diligence and expedition. There have been two combats between those enemies at sea, and in both the Dutch had the worst of it; neither did the French escape without some loss, having two of their greatest ships severely shattered, and a third taken by the English.

The plague still rages in England, and has almost depopulated whole provinces; whilst a milder death has robbed France of one of her greatest heroes: The Count d'Harcourt, of whom I have often made mention, is gone to celebrate the triumphs due to his valour and fortune in another world.

The Emperor of Germany has at last married the Infanta of Spain, after abundance of demurs and hesitations about that business. These Nazarenes can do nothing with expedition. The spiritual courts, as they call them, have more tricks and cramp words to amuse people with, than an Indian mountebank or juggler. Neither are sovereign princes more exempt from their jurisdiction than the meanest of their subjects: Especially, the court of Rome can make or annul marriages at pleasure; and they are sure to be excommunicated who refuse to submit to their orders. This holy court can also bind or release sins, open or shut the gates of paradise, make a devil a saint, or a saint a devil; in a word, they can do every thing if there be gold in the case; but if that be wanting, they can do nothing but swing their shoulders.

Thou mayest also inform the divan, that the French king has given permission to some of his subjects to undertake a conquest in America, and establish a commerce in that part of the world. Many vessels are equipped in

order to this expedition, and they that are concerned in the voyage are as merry as Jason and his Argonauts, when they were preparing to fetch the golden fleece from Colchos. That western continent affords immense riches, and tempts all the nations in Europe to make an experiment of their fortune in gaining one part of it or other. It were to be wished it lay nearer to the Ottoman empire. No record can discover the origin of the inhabitants; yet most authors conjecture that they passed over from the north-east parts of Asia, where the Straits of Anian are very narrow, and would invite sea-faring men to seek new adventures. Besides, by their being cannibals, it appears very probable, that either they descended from the Tartars, or the Tartars from them. God alone knows how to adjust the differences, and reveal the secrets of history.

Brave bassia, it is no matter from what stock we are descended, so long as we have virtue, for that alone is the only true nobility. God regale thee with his favours.

Paris, 30th of the 9th Moon, of the Year 1666.

XIV.—To PESTELI HALI, his Brother, Master of the Customs, and Superintendant of the Arsenal at Constantinople.

WHEN I hear of thy prosperity, my heart is dilated, like his who has found hidden wealth; yet I am sorry for the disgrace of the good old man thy predecessor: But we must not censure the conduct of our superiors; the justice of their actions is not to be called in question; the sultan cannot err. This is an established maxim in all monarchies, especially in that of the renowned Osmans.

. As for what relates to thee in this new advance thou hast made, thy own experience, acquired by many years travel and observation in foreign countries, added to the knowledge thou hast in the laws, discipline, and customs of thy own, will be a sufficient guide to conduct thee in the management of thy business: Yet despise not the counsel of others. A man is never nearer to ruin than when he trusts too much to his own wisdom; therefore the greatest emperors undertake nothing of moment rashly, or without advice. Temerity often blasts the fairest designs.

. It will be of particular import to thee to hear of a tragical event that has lately happened to Rezan, a great city in Russia, by the blowing up of the magazine. This gun-powder does more mischief than good in the world. The ancients fought as successfully with bows and arrows, swords and spears, and other instruments of war, without running the hazard of blowing up whole cities into the air in time of peace; and they could undermine the strongest castles, even those situated on rocks, without the help of this infernal dust. Nature taught them to be industrious in defeating their enemies, and they spared no labour to gain the victory. Our forefathers were hardy and strong, patient of toils and fatigues; they cut their ways into mountains of stone, if any place of strength were built on it which they had occasion to besiege; and as they hewed away that part of the rock which supported the walls, they underpropped the foundation with wooden pillars, and when they had finished their mine, they set fire to certain combustible matter, which consuming these supports, the walls and gates that rested on them sunk down, and left the fortrefs naked and open to the besiegers.

. It had been well for the inhabitants of Rezan if their

city had been only thus gently dismantled by some enemy against whom they might have afterwards employed their courage, to defend themselves, or make composition; but, poor unfortunate people, they have felt a ruder shock, an unmerciful blow of fate, in their city being in a minute's time, without the least warning, stormed, plundered, and laid in heaps, by an enemy which gives no quarter.

This accident happened on the 15th of the last moon, about the hour of Ulanamisi. There were five hundred barrels of powder in the magazine; and the force of the blow was so violent, that, besides the destruction of that city, or at least the best part of it, all the neighbouring villages round about it felt its fatal effects, some of their houses shaking as in an earthquake, others falling to pieces.

Assuredly Heaven is angry with these infidels, and turns the very instruments of their defence and safety into scourges for their chastisement. I formerly sent Saleh the superintendant an account of the like misfortune that befel the city of Gravelines in Flanders, and of other terrible effects of the wrath of Heaven in the Low Countries. One disaster follows close on the back of another; yet the infidels are insensible and stupid, as they were in the days of Noah, when the flood came and surprised all the inhabitants of the country. That prophet gave them warning of the approaching danger; he was three whole years in cutting down Indian plane-trees, and preparing planks, beams, pins, and other necessaries, and seven years more in building that wonderful ship: The infidels went by daily, and saw him at work; but they derided the patient apostle, and taught their children to mock him, saying, "Where is the water this ship is to sail in?" After the ark was finished, it lay on the ground

seven moons, till they had thence sacrificed some of Noah's followers to their idols.

It was perfected in the moon of Rajeb, and in the moon of Saphar was the decree of the chastisement sign'd, which was to be executed on all of mortal race, save Noah, and the fourscore that were with him, with the two pairs of every species, which the four winds, by God's appointment, collected together and drove into the ark, and the body of Adam, which was enshrined and brought to Noah by angels out of the region of Mecca. There was also Philemon, the good priest of Egypt, with his whole family.

Just as the determined day and hour of the flood was come, the prince of the country, stimulated by his evil destiny, mounted his horse, with some of his retinue, and having sacrificed to their idols, rode toward the place where Noah and his company were shut up in the ark, with a design to burn it to ashes. He called out aloud to the prophet with scoffs, saying, "O Noah, where is the water in which this ship is to sail?" "It will be with you incontinently (replied the holy man), before you can remove your station." "Come down, thou dotard (said the proud infidel), otherwise I will burn thee and thy companions with fire." "O miserable man! (said Noah) turn to God, for his judgments are ready to burst forth on you."

The prince incensed at this, commanded his slaves to put fire to the ark: But while he was yet speaking, he manifestly saw the water gushing out on all hands round about him, and under his feet. Then his heart was troubled, and full of anguish and fear; he halted to secure himself, with his family and goods, in the castles which he had built on the highest mountains; but, alas! the earth opened, and broke like a spider's web, so violent

was the force of the waters which boiled up every where. The clouds poured down vast cataracts of rain, mixed with dreadful and unsupportable thunder and lightning; the miserable infidels thronged upon one another, cursing and blaspheming their gods, who had deluded them; great was the confusion and cry every where, for such a calamity had never been known since the moon gave her light. If any were so nimble as to reach the foot of a mountain, yet he could not ascend by reason of stones which fell on his head, and torrents of boiling water that ran down upon him, as if it had come out of a cauldron; and suppose he had reached the top, it had been but a short delay of his fate; for, in a word, the waters swelled forty cubits above the highest mountains, and all the living generations perished.

Son of my mother, when thou readest this memoir, (for it is a fragment of an ancient Arabian writing) think on the day of judgment, which shall surprize the world even as the deluge did. At that hour the greatest part of men will not dream of any such thing, till they see flames and rivers of fire burbling forth from the springs and fountains, which before yielded water, and showers of fire descending from heaven, instead of rain; for the elements will change their courses to accomplish the decrees of him who made them, and to consummate the revenge of the Omnipotent against unbelievers.

Paris, 2d of the 11th Moon, of the Year 1666.

XV.—To USEPH, *Bassa*.

SURELY the gods of the English are angry with that people, and the guardian spirits of the isle have forsook their charge. I sent a dispatch at the beginning of this

year to Murat, bafsa, wherein I informed him of a destructive plague raging at London and in other parts of the nation. That pestilence continues still, but under different forms, to assault the living, and augment the number of the dead.

God only knows the origin of these epidemical contagions, whether they derive their pedigree from heaven or hell, from the earth, or any other element. Perhaps some latent poisons in the air mix with the breath of mortals, and by their subtle energy soon dissipate the vital flame of human bodies, like the infectious blasts of the wind El-Samiel in Arabia, which in a moment's time commits a rape upon the lives of travellers, scorching their spirits up, and leaving on the sands a black stiff carcase of jellied flesh, as though they had been thunder-struck: Or perhaps some venomous exhalations from the minerals below transpire through chinks and crannies in the earth, to plunder mortals of their breath, like to the fatal vapours in the cave of death, not far from Virgil's grotto in Italy: Or who can tell but that some hidden meteors above, or some malignant stars, may send down whole battalions of empoisoned atoms to invade this region of mortality, and in death's name, king of the world invisible, to claim and carry away a certain number of ghosts pricked down by destiny, a tribute set by fate? However it be, that whole island may well be called at this time the grand infirmary of Europe, where baneful sickness makes its public residence. The timorous glâfres run from place to place, thinking to escape from Heaven's all-searching pursuivants; they flee from populous towns to villages, and from these again to unfrequented desarts, woods, and heaths, carrying their wives and children with them, and all the substance of their houses; the roads are covered with the caravans of

doubtful passengers, who dread to think of going back to the contagious seats they left behind, yet know not where to be received anew; so general is the consternation, so strong the fear of those who yet survive, lest they should also catch the infection and die.

Besides this, they have felt the strokes of another surprising calamity, London, the capital city of England, being newly consumed by fire. It is not certain whether design or chance first kindled the devouring element; but it fell out at an unlucky season, when the wind was high, and from its eastern quarter blew the flames full west, which spreading north and south, demolished all before them, laying the greatest part of that rich and famous city in ashes.

Some ascribe this to a plot of the French; others term it a judgment of God for their rebellion, pride, and other crying sins; whilst, with equal probability, a third sort affirm it was contrived and put in execution by a cabal of carpenters and masons, who wanting employment, and projecting the method of enriching themselves, disdain- ing also the inartificial and obsolete form of buildings, resolved to put this city into a new figure, and raise it according to the models of foreign architecture. Every one guesses as his affections incline him, or his conjectures follow the bias of his interest. Men are always partial to themselves and the cause they have espoused. God only knows the truth.

The superstitious among the Roman catholics take occasion, from the timing of this horrible conflagration, to insult over the English protestants, who, from some obscure passages in the book of their gospel, used to foretel, in a prophetic manner, that the final ruin and catastrophe of Rome would happen in this year 1666, whereas, by

fatal experience, more sure than vain predictions, they find the metropolis of their own nation reduced to ashes.

Whoever are the instruments in these tragedies, it is certain the designs of fate are still performed. Every kingdom, state, and community, has its critical periods and characters, wherein it suffers detriment *.

Paris, 2d of the 11th Moon, of the Year 1666.

XVI.—*To CARA HALI, Physician to the Grand Signior.*

I AM melancholy beyond the description of painters, poets, or the lively eloquence of Cicero. Methinks I am some exotic being, a perfect foreigner on earth, a stranger to its laws and maxims. I appear to other mortals like a Giafre, or Frank, in his western dress at Morocco, Babylon, or Constantinople; I mean not for my outward habit (for in that I am conformable enough to the mode of the religion where I reside), but I am all unfashionable within, ridiculous in my sentiments and conversation. When others laugh, I sigh, and find a reason to be sad in the midst of merry company. Even wine itself, that exhilarates all the world beside, does but increase my melancholy, by adding strength unto my labouring thoughts. It sublimates my spirits up to sacred phrenzies; I am all lunatic at such a time; each glass creates new dreams, more wild than the strange flights and raptures of a Santone. My heated spleen, like Mount Gibel, belches forth horrid clouds of smoke and vapours, which lay long smothering in its spongy caverns; these quickly spread,

* This blank the Italian preface mentions, and says it is owing to the loss of some part of the Arabic letter, supposed to be torn off by chance, or on some other occasion.

and cover all the horizon of my soul, rendering it dark and gloomy as the Cimmerian solitudes, or the more dismal valleys bordering on the river Styx, where surly Charon waits to ferry over the caravans of trembling ghosts, and land them in Elysium.

Oh! that those fables of the ancient poets were but true! or that I knew but something certain of our future state! whether the soul survives or no, when death has stopped the circulation of our blood; and what becomes of that immortal substance after its parting from the body; whether it pass by transmigration into the embryo of some other animal, as Pythagoras taught, or be united, swallowed up, and lost, in the universal soul of the world, as Plato did believe; or, if some other magnet does attract its presence, and hidden sympathies of nature teach it to form itself a vehicle or body of the elements. Perhaps some souls unite with air, whilst others mix with water, earth, or purer skies. This for its horrid sins in mortal state, may be, by the eternal Nemesis, sunk down into the fatal caverns of Mount Etna, Stromboli, or Vesuvius, there to incorporate with burning rivers and lakes of sulphur and other minerals, to hear perpetually the frightful cracking, rumbling, and loud thunders of those infernal vaults, to be without intermission annoyed with the eternal stench of melted mines, whose poignant vapours equally kill it and revive it every moment, that it may be confined to an endless circle of miseries; to feel the excruciating torments which no tongue can utter; whilst the incessant, rapid motion of those exalted, and most violent fires with which it is embodied by decree of fate, rob it of the very possibility of the least easy thought or quiet minute, and at the same time rack it with infinite tortures.

Think not, my dear physician, that it is impossible a

separate spirit can thus be sensible of pains : There is no such thing as a separate spirit, save God, who made all bodies, and therefore was before them. The angels themselves are partly corporeal ; so are the devils. Do not believe then, that mortal man, who is in a middle state between these two, shall, by dying, gain a privilege above the most illustrious spirits, in heaven. As soon as death has dislodged us from one body, nature, providence, or fate, provides us another, according to our qualities, inclinations, and merits. We may as well by metempsychosis become the spirit or soul of a flaming sulphur mine, or at least of some part of it, as of an horse, an eagle, or a dove ; for such, for aught we know, may be the dispositions of divine wisdom, justice, and omnipotence.

By the very same reason another soul may be transported to the open happy skies, where it may either range in boundless, free, and serene tracks of bliss, or be enfranchised in the corporations of the stars, to dwell in palaces of azure, topazes, and diamonds, to possess provinces more rich than in Peru or Guinea, where the rustics plough up gold more beautiful and pleasant than the famous fields of Thessaly. God knows what will become of us after our dissolution ; but the ignorance of this one truth occasions all my melancholy.

Death is not formidable of itself, nor all the dolorous circumstances that precede it ; it is only what comes after raises all my terror. Were I to melt away in lingering agues and consumptions, or to be sooner posted off in high-wrought fevers, pleurisies, or pestilence ; or if it were my fate to die by pistol, sword, or poison, or any other kind of slow or sudden death, allotted me from chance or nature, providence or fate ; should heaven consume me in a trice by lightning, or this globe, with equal swiftness, bury me in some surprising earthquake, it

would be all one to Mahmut, were it not for the aft-claps, to which I am a stranger. I tremble at the hidden and unsearchable force of nature; I dread the irreversible, unknown decrees of fate, the secret methods of eternal destiny, the laws and order of the other world, in billeting the troops of human souls that go to winter there after this life's campaign is finished.

Once in a cold and frosty evening, as I was travelling over a bleak, wide plain, and felt the penetrating blasts of north-east winds, with chilling fleet, which fell upon me from the clouds, my spirits also tired with tedious journeys, and my anxious thoughts being wholly taken up about a resting-place that night, and how to avoid the assault of robbers, with a thousand other perils threatening a stranger on the road; at length I chanced to think of the untried and remote voyage I must one day make to another world: It chilled my blood to imagine the disconsolate, naked circumstances of a separate soul, which, for aught I knew, might be bewildered, lost, and forced to wander up and down, through untraced wastes of misty, frozen air, where the inhospitable element affords no guides, no caravanseras to comfortless, poor, straggling ghosts, unless they would accept a lodging in some cloud, the cistern and chariot of rain, hail, or snow, there to incorporate with the unwelcome meteors, and be whirled round the globe, or else precipitated down to earth again in showers, from thence perhaps to be exhaled by the sun, and mixed with embryos of lightning, fiery dragons, ignes fatui, or other bodies hourly flaming in the welkin, and thus to circulate in endless transmigrations. Who knows the circumstances of departed souls, or laws of a separate state? Let him declare what usage we shall find in that invisible and dark recess from life; he shall be then e-

seemed more than Apollo by the pensive Mahmut. Not the old Delphic oracle could receive greater reverence from the inquisitive world, nor Meccâ now from devout mussulman pilgrims, or Medina Tahnabi, where the prophet rests in peace, than such an one should have from me, who could with unfeigned truth discover how we shall be disposed of when we die. But I am cloyed and nauseated with the dull romances of the priests and dervises.

My friend; let thou and I learn to improve the joys of present life, and not by damned mistakes deprive ourselves of double happiness; but let us so comport ourselves, that our transmigration may be but from the pleasures of earth to those of heaven, from one paradise to another.

Paris, 6th of the 1st Moon, of the Year 1667.

XVII.—*To KERKER HASSAN, Bassa.*

THE blessings of God and his prophet cheer thy heart, as thou hast exhilarated mine by thy last letter, wherein thou encouragest me with the hopes of being removed from this disagreeable post, to one more delightful and happy, even to a sweet country retirement, either in Arabia, or any other part of the Grand Signior's dominions, which is the very mark of all my wishes.

I have a natural aversion for great and populous cities. They seem to be so many magnificent sepulchres of the living, where men are shut up, imprisoned, and buried from all commerce with the elements; or they are like hospitals and pest-houses, where people crowd, infect, and stink one another to death with a thousand pollutions: They hive together like bees, and build their

apartments in darkness; like nests of pismires, they trudge up and down all the summer of their youth to heap up treasures; that they may spend the winter of their old age in loathsome ease and benumbed stupidity, not daring to venture out of the purlieu of their nasty, smoky habitations, and yet they are ready to be stifled with their own breath.

It is with pleasure I contemplate the face of the infant earth, before it was deformed by the unnecessary arts of the carpenter, smith, and mason; when men had no other houses save what they made themselves, every one for his family, of the branches and boughs of trees, interwoven with osiers, reeds, and ivy, and covered thick with leaves and grass, to shelter them from wind, hail, rain, and other injuries of weather; or, perhaps, some had found out a den, or a cave in the earth, or the hollow of a rock, for a sanctuary in such cases, where they reposed in perfect tranquillity, without fear of snares or violence, without apprehension of robbers, or any tragical surprize; they went out and in, slept and waked, laboured and rested, in safety and quiet; avarice, envy, and injustice had not as yet corrupted the minds of mortals; the earth brought forth corn, herbage, and fruits, without the husbandman's or gardener's labour; all places abounded with plenty of innocent refreshments, and those primitive inhabitants coveted no more; the cattle and bees afforded them milk and honey, and the fountain waters were generous as wine. This globe was a complete paradise, and no mistaken zeal had taught men religiously to invade one another's rights, and in a pious fury to murder their neighbours, in hopes of meriting heaven hereafter; there was no such thing as bigotry or superstition to be found among any of human race; the law of nature was in universal force; every man pursued

the dictates of reason, without harkening after religion, sophistry, and sacred fables.

But when once the love of gold had corrupted men's manners, and they, not contented with the riches and sweets which they daily dropped from the surface of the earth, had found a way to descend into her bowels, stung with an insatiable desire of hidden treasures; then began injustice, oppression, and cruelty to take place: Men made inclosures to themselves, and encompassed a certain portion of land with hedges, ditches, and pales, to fence them from the invasions of others; for the guilt of their own vicious inclinations filled them with fears, and made them jealous of one another. They built themselves strong-holds, fortresses, castles, and cities; and their terrors increasing with their criminal possessions, they persuaded themselves, that the very elements would prove their enemies, if not pacified by bribes and presents. Hence sprung the first invention of altars and sacrifices; and from these vain panie fears of mortals, the gods derived their pedigree; for one built a temple to the sun, another to the moon, a third to Jupiter, Mars, or the rest of the planets; some adored the fire, others the water or wind: every one set up to himself such a god as he fancied would be propitious to him. Thus error being equally propagated with human nature, they created an infinite rabble of imaginary deities, paying to those idols the supreme and incommunicable honours due only to the Eternal Essence, Father and Source of all things.

Besides, they lived in intolerable pride and luxury, in constant wars and strife, in darkness, ignorance, and confusion. I speak of such as dwelt in cities, and were incorporated together by one common interest; for still there remained some who obeyed the original laws of nature, and the traditions of primitive humanity.

These dwell in tents, or other moveable habitations, as our countrymen the Arabs do at this day, with the Tartars their brethren. They scorned to fasten themselves to the earth, by possessing any part of it in propriety; every field and wood, hill and valley, river and well, were with them in common; they straggled whither they pleased.

This is the life so emulated by me, or, instead of that, at least a retirement from cities, that I may breathe out my last hours in a free air, remote from the stifling company and contagion of mortals. I long to range at liberty through unfrequented paths of desert ground, over wild, unpolished heaths, from thence insensibly to fall into some venerable solitude, where the dry, mossy barks of trees, in silent characters, proclaim the antiquity of the place, and gentle whispers of the winds instruct the methods of Platonic love, inspire strange passions which we never felt before, and teach us to converse with satyrs, nymphs, and other harmless tenants of the shades. How great is the pleasure to be thus surpris'd with some harmonious, warbling stream, or silent, soft, deep, crystal river! to speak incognito with dryads, hamadryads, and the sporting echoes; to lie dissolved in loose, yet innocent enjoyments, on the banks, to talk with nature, with immortal substances, and with eternity itself! Oh God! is not this ravishing?

It is difficult to say whether it would be pleasant or painful to return from these ineffable parades of the soul; to our domestic felicities, though even in a rural life, which I acknowledge to be the happiest on earth; yet there to trace the herds and flocks, to walk amidst the high grown corn and grass, to pluck the bearded ears of barley, to let our eyes roll over the various figures of the wind-blown wheat and millet, our noses to suck the

fragrant airs of marjorum, thyme, oranges, and lemons, with innumerable spices, our ears to hear the inimitable melody of birds, and every sense to be transported, snatched away, and lost in sacred ecstasies, must needs be ranked among the highest kinds of earthly pleasures.

But to descend from these enjoyments to the meanest and most common diversions of a country life, methinks there is something peculiarly charming in the very declining situation of the houses, whether it be on the brow of an hill or the bottom of a valley, in the midst of a wood or the opening of an heath, on the side of a road or in some obscure corner of the country; it is agreeable, when waking in the morning, to hear the bleating of sheep, lowing of oxen, screaming, quacking, and crowing of geese, ducks, cocks, and other homebred animals; to hear the louder winds threatening to tear up trees by the roots, demolish houses, and remove the globe itself, if possible, from off its basis. This would be better music to me, for a change, than a concert of dulcimers, theorbos, timbrels, and viols. Human nature delights in variety, and there is a certain audacious curiosity in the soul, which loves to venture on extremes. The rain, the dirt, the stink of hogs, camels, dromedaries, and other necessary rural beasts, would please me better than the constant tedious ease and fulsome sweets of court or city; I sweat whilst thus shut up within these walls; it cloyes me to be daily walking in a circle; to trample away over the same ground, in a vast labyrinth of houses, where my senses meet no new refreshing objects, but my ears are hourly nauseated, vexed, and tired with the rattling din of coaches, carts, artificers, and the harsh voices of such as sell flesh, fish, and other things about the streets; my eyes can find no grateful prospects, but dashed with surly rugged looks

of proud and wealthy infidels, or with the fly satiric smiles of well-shaped people, who condemn me for my bandy legs and crooked back.

In a word, my dear bassâ, I long to feel the gentle breezes of the East purifying my soul, and cleansing it from so many pollutions; I languish for the sight of turbans and crescents, for the devout call of the muezins on the lofty minarets; I die in contemplation of the fasted fasts and feasts, the nocturnal joys of Ramezan, the revels and cheerful illuminations of Beiram, and the imperial dunalmas. When I think of these things, my soul bursts forth in fervent invocations, and every faculty cries, Alla, Alla.

May that divine and immortal one hear my prayers, and grant me the happiness to see the face of noble Kerker Hassan in an horizon pure and free from the defilement of infidels.

Paris, 14th of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1667.

XVIII.—*To ISOUF, his Cousin, a Merchant at Astracan.*

I SENT a dispatch to thee in the year 1664, wherein, among other things, I recommended our cousin Solyman to thy friendship and patronage, if ever he should travel to Astracan, as I advised him; for thou knowest he has a roaming genius, without the wit to improve himself in any foreign country, unless he has a friend to guide and take care of him; and then it will be a difficult task to make him sensible where he is; he will always think he is within the verge of the Grand Signior's hunt; where he may domineer at large, under the notion of a retainer to the sultan; he is a strange humour'd fellow; I know not what to make of him; he is as

changeable as Proteus or a camelion; sometimes religiously dull and phlegmatic, like a hadgi; at another season, you shall feel his pulse beating to the tune of youthful pride, ambition, lust, and other vices; to-day he would be a dervise, fantone, or any thing that bears the form of holiness; but when he has slept upon it, the vain young convert would return again to the world, and be a soldier, courtier, professor of the law, or any thing that makes a figure in the eyes of men; so unwelcome are the rigid paths of virtue to a soul not well established in its principles.

And yet our cousin Solyman, as I am told, is the mussulman of the mussulmans as to his exterior. With hand devoutly laid to breast, and humblest couch of the head, he gives the Salem to his friends and neighbours; soft as the signs of mutes in the seraglio; humble, as the Grecian chapman, walking through the streets, is forced to imitate, when he is hectored by the rampant janizaries.

But, Oh, my cousin Isouf, it is grief to say, that Solyman, partaker of our blood, is base, ungrateful, and perfidious; that he should be thus unnatural, studying the utmost period of our life, instead of honest, just, and noble presents to prolong it.

I had reason, long ago, to compare him to Pontius Pilate; and if I had gone on, and scummed off all the most enormous crimes of human race, it would be too little to express his enmity against Mahmut, the kindest uncle and the truest friend that ever poor Solyman could boast of.

But he is degenerate, and that is too little, without the mournful sighs of thee and me to increase the aggravation of his crime.

In fine, he is our kinsman, and let us show mercy;

he has been perfidious to me, and I would retrench the words I have spoken in his disgrace ; if he comes to Afracan, do as thou pleafest ; but have an eye over thine own affairs ; take not Solyman for an angel ; he is ftill but a turban-maker, a frolicfome blade, and a merchant that makes a very fmall figure.

Coufin Ifouf, forget not the maxims thou haft learned in thy travels : Be true to thy friends and thyfelf ; honour the memory of thy deceafed parents ; love all men that are good ; and be not remifs in praying for the foul of thy deceafed uncle, whenever God fhall call for it.

Paris, 26th of the 2d Moon, of the Year 1667.

END OF VOLUME SIXTH.

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